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LITTLE SWEETHEART.

BY SYLVIA A. MOSS.

O, I met you, little sweetheart,
In flowery summer time,
When everything was musical—
The brooklets flowed in rhyme.

A face more fair, a heart more kind,
A soul more brave and true
I have not found, and that is why
I still remember you.

Fettered, Yet Free.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LIKE UNTO A STAR," "BRUNA'S STORY," "A GIRL'S DESPAIR," "TWICE MARRIED," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VII—(CONTINUED.)

NOTHING in her attitude, nothing in the expression of her beautiful, proud face showed how intensely she was suffering. Sir Hugh's grieved, longing gaze saw only the careless indifference of her attitude, the languid lashes lying on the pale cheek, the repose, the stillness which seemed to speak so loudly of her calmness. He could not know that his own pain was as nothing to hers,—that she felt as if life were slowly drifting away from her, in the terrible anguish of that moment.

He himself was suffering keenly just then; he had come from the Hall with an intense longing at his heart to see her, to know whether she were really ill or whether that those passionate words of his had offended her, and so induced her to shun him. The sight of her coming out of the drawing room in her long, white dress, the fever flush of excitement upon her cheek, the feverish lustre making her eyes like stars in her pale face, had made him believe that she had purposely avoided meeting him.

"Even the sight of me is hateful to her," the poor fellow was thinking, as he leaned against the stone balustrade, under the quiet night sky, looking with pained eyes at the beautiful, proud face, which the crimson cushions, against which she leaned, made so white. "She is as cold as she is beautiful; as cruel as she is cold."

"It is a fine night," Cecil said, breaking the silence desperately, in the fear that if it lasted much longer she would burst into tears.

Sir Hugh started.

"A fine night!" he said mechanically, repeating the words without a very clear sense as to their meaning.

"But it is getting a little chilly, I think," the girl said nervously. "I think, if you will excuse me, I will go in."

"Not yet," he said quickly, in a low tone of eagerest entreaty. "Give me a few minutes yet. You are not cold! And—and the night is so fair."

"Yes, but your guests will wonder what has become of their host," Cecil said, trying to speak calmly.

"It does not matter," he said recklessly; "I must speak to you. You are angry with me; ah, do not deny it, you are so changed in so short a time. This afternoon you were so sweet and so gracious, now you are so cold that I cannot but guess how."

He was no longer lounging against the balustrade now—he was standing beside her eager, earnest, and erect; his face aglow his eyes lit up with love.

Cecil sat still; if she had had strength she would have left him, but all her calmness had faded: in the supreme moment she was nerveless and tremulous, and she dared not speak lest her voice should betray her.

"Those words I spoke to you this afternoon," he went on, his voice shaking with the passionate emotion so long repressed, which had burst its bonds now, "I ought not to have spoken then. I had no right, you had given me no right, but I could not help them, Cecil and they came from my heart,—my heart which is all yours. 'My darling' I called you then, and you are my darling, Cecil, the one woman whom I have ever loved, whom I shall ever love."

For a moment, as she listened, it seemed to Cecil Lestrange that the passionate, eager voice had grown faint and distant, that the blue sky and the flowers and trees had all begun some wild dance before her eyes, but she recovered herself almost immediately, and Sir Hugh never guessed how nearly she had swooned.

"That is what I had to tell you," the young man went on, his voice sinking to tones of the softest tenderness. "That I love you. Cecil, how dearly, how truly how passionately I cannot tell, but if you will let me, my life shall show, shall prove to you how great that love is. Cecil, answer me—tell me, is there any hope for me? You, who are so sweet and pitiful to the world, will surely be pitiful to me!"

She tried to speak to him, but the words would not come. She had been brave enough in theory, it had been difficult even in thought to put away his love from her, but the reality was almost an impossibility, it seemed beyond her strength.

She felt cold, and sick, and faint, her limbs were trembling and strengthless. She loved him with a love as great, aye, greater perhaps than his own; it would have been so sweet, so matchlessly sweet to have put her hand in his and spent the rest of her life by his side. It would not be a long life, the physicians had said once, and she remembered their words now. Must its short remainder, the few little years, be full of unspeakable weariness and loneliness? Might she not take this great good thing which he laid at her feet and know at least what happiness was, before she went away and was no more seen? Must she break his heart and her own? She could not do it, and yet—and yet—

"This cannot have surprised or startled you," Sir Hugh went on earnestly. "You must have seen ere this how utter and complete my humiliation is. At first I tried to resist you, I tried to put you out of my heart——"

She looked up at him suddenly as if startled by some thought.

"Why," she asked, in an eager, broken voice,—"why did you try?"

"Because I thought you could never care for me," he said with a little smile. "You seemed so far above me, so——"

That was your only reason, then," she interrupted him, rather huskily: "my supremacy?"

"What other, dear?" he queried tenderly. "I know how small my deserts are. How could I hope to win you? And yet, Cecil, since that day, that most blessed day when I saw you first, you have been my first thought."

"Do not bless the day," she said, with a little imperative gesture of the hand, as she rose and moved a few steps away across the terrace. "No one yet has had cause to bless the day on which they met me."

He followed her eagerly. She stopped abruptly, leaning against the balustrade, and turning her pale face to him in the dim light, forcing a smile to her white lips.

"You did it all very well," she said, in a constrained voice, which was only firm by strong effort. "Very well. I do not think anyone could have done it better. And the mise-en-scene is perfect, too, which added greatly to its effect: the terrace, that old cedar standing out against the sky, the moon hung so low, and that one pale star; it all looks like a scene in a play, does not it?—one of those scenes one sees at the London theatres, you know, when there is a love scene to be framed! I don't think even the Kendals could have a prettier one than this, certainly not such a back-ground. Look"—she raised her little shaking hand for a moment and pointed to the house, then let it fall heavily at her side—"how charming the Gate House looks with a window lighted here and there!"

Her voice failed her suddenly; it had been growing lower as she uttered the last few words; but she looked at him still with strangely bright, restless eyes. The young man met the glance with astonishment in his own; he wondered at her manner and at her careless, mocking words, which he could not understand; he was too deeply in earnest to think that she was trying to treat his avowal as a jest: she looked like a beautiful pale ghost as she stood there in her long white gown, leaning against the balustrade.

"I have seen many such scenes," she went on carelessly; "have not you? The moon is generally at the full though,"—a great, round, staring, impudent moon, instead of a pretty little crescent like that. And I like the new moon best; do not you?"

"Cecil!" he urged, startled by her manner, and wondering at her meaning.

"And there is often a terrace like this, and a girl in a white gown like mine, and a young man who makes love to her as you—as you—as you have been doing to me, with just as much sincerity and——"

He started eagerly forward.

"Cecil!" he exclaimed passionately; "you cannot doubt my truth!"

"I think the hour, and the place, and the surroundings have bewitched you," she returned with a pale little smile which just touched her lips and faded away again immediately. "You thought it such a good opportunity that you could not resist it. Perhaps you even thought that I—that I would expect it from you, and you did not wish to disappoint me."

The mocking tone had died out of her voice; it was only tired now, and her face, even to her lips, was as colorless as her gown.

"I do not understand you," he said passionately. "Why are you treating my avowal as if it were a jest, or a piece of acting got up for your amusement? You know that in all my life I was never more in earnest than I am now; that I love you as, I think, few women are loved in——"

She raised her hand with a little imperative gesture.

"There is such a thing as protesting too much," she said, smiling another little pale, difficult lip smile. "You have done very well for one night, so well indeed that I think you have mistaken your vocation; you have even impressed me, and I have seen excellent acting."

"You are acting yourself!" he said passionately; "you cannot really think that I am not sincere, Cecil," he went on changing his tone to one of earnest entreaty. "Do not jest with me, dear; I am only a rough, country-bred fellow, and I am not good at such things. I love you! Tell me whether you can love me enough to be my wife."

She was silent, how could she answer him, poor soul? Longing for his love with the greatest yearning she could ever know, when it was held out to her how could she put it away without breaking her heart?

He drew a little nearer to her in the silence; the scent of the dying flowers rose heavy on the air. Cecil had taken the beautiful yellow rose from her breast and was nervously pulling it to pieces and scattering the leaves on the terrace at her feet.

"Tell me, my darling," he urged earnestly, his voice shaken by the depth of feeling with which he spoke, "what is to be my fate? Is it impossible that you should ever care enough for me to become my wife? I will try so hard to make you happy; I will——"

"It is impossible!" she said suddenly in a low voice, anxious only to end this scene before her strength should fail her. "It is impossible!"

He drew back from her, his face as pale as her own in the dying light.

"Impossible!" he echoed in a tone at once incredulous, angry, and miserable.

"Yes—impossible!" she repeated in a low, tuneless voice, with a slight halt between both words; and as she uttered them, she lifted herself slowly from her leaning attitude and stood erect, the scattered rose leaves lying at her feet.

Hugh, looking at her, saw only that she stood up calm and stately and proud; he could not guess that there was a mist before her eyes which blotted out his agitated face, and that the chill of faintness was creeping over her. For a moment he was silent, staring at her with incredulous passion in his blue eyes, then unsteadily, with steps which faltered, she moved slowly away from him towards the open window from which the soft lamplight streamed.

He watched her without a word, without a movement to detain her, and as he looked he saw that she paused suddenly, put up her hands to her head for a moment in a troubled manner, then moved them feebly before her, groping as it were for some support, and tottered.

Sir Hugh followed her, all his anger evaporating, a great flood of rapture swelling in his heart: she could not send him away, after all, he thought triumphantly, and as her strength failed her entirely, and she fell, he caught her on his arm.

"Cecil!" he whispered passionately; "Cecil!"

CHAPTER VIII.

Cecil had not fainted, but she was utterly strengthless. Had her life depended on it she could not have stirred, and but for Sir Hugh's support she must have fallen to the ground. Her head sank forward on her breast, her eyes were dim and sightless, her hands fell helplessly at her side, her body leaned a dead weight on his strong, supporting arm, yet the blessing of utter unconsciousness was denied her. In her agony she knew that she had failed, that this weakness which she had struggled against in vain would confess the truth she had striven to hide from him; that her suffering had been futile; he would not believe now that she did not love him.

She could not see the sudden change of the handsome, eager face bending over hers, the triumph, the rapture which suddenly blotted out all its pain and despair; her senses were too dim to hear the alteration in his voice, as he uttered that passionately tender "Cecil!" Yet she knew that he guessed the truth by that strong, tender clasp which held her so fondly, and from which she could not disengage herself in her weakness.

And then she felt herself lifted lightly in his strong arms, which held her so

easily and so tenderly, and carried towards the house, and her misery and failure found vent, as she hid her face upon his breast in a passionate burst of tears.

In utter silence, yet with heavily beating heart and trembling a little, Sir Hugh carried her into the drawing-room, and putting her in a great arm-chair by the open window, knelt down beside her, waiting with what patience he might until the passionate sobs should cease.

The violence of her agitation alarmed him greatly; the slender, white clad form shook with the heavy sobs; she had bowed her head upon her hands on the arm of her chair, and hidden her face from him, and only her white throat was visible to the eager, anxious, passionate eyes which dwelt upon her with such love, and pain, and triumph.

"Was my touch so hateful to you, Cecil?" he said in a husky, broken voice. "Is it that you not only do not love me, but that you hate me? If that be so indeed, I will go away and never trouble you again, never urge the love which is so distasteful to you."

The heavy sobs were decreasing now; Cecil's passionate agitation was growing less, but she kept her face hidden in her hands, gradually the sobs sank into sobbing sighs, and these were stilled in sheer exhaustion.

Sir Hugh had left her side, and was pacing restlessly up and down the pretty room, his face very pale, his eyes very eager in the soft lamp-light; through the open window the cool night air came in, touching Cecil's aching brow with its refreshing breath, and doing its large share in bringing back the calmness which had been so sorely shaken; the scent of the June roses was sweet and heavy; the lamps which Knolls had brought in while they were on the terrace were burning softly, giving a pleasant subdued light.

Presently Cecil raised her head from her clasped hands, and let it fall back languidly upon the cushions of her great chair. Her face was very pale, but the painful expression of repressed suffering had faded; it was almost peaceful, although very, very sad, and yet, mingling with the sadness was some other expression which was very much like happiness.

Sir Hugh stopped in his perambulations, and, standing by her chair, looked down at her with an intent expression, which brought a faint color into her cheeks, then he turned away, and crossing the room, rang the bell.

Cecil watched him in a little surprise, when Knolls' step was heard outside; he went to the door, spoke to the servant without admitting him, and waited near the door until he returned with a salver, on which stood a solitary decanter and wine-glass, which Sir Hugh took from him, and, closing the door, carried into the room; meeting Cecil's questioning eyes he smiled a little.

"I am going to administer this," he said in a voice which, light as it was, was full of tender anxiety. "Oh, it is nothing very formidable, only sherry."

He filled the glass and brought it to her side. Cecil put out her hand to take it from him, but the little fingers were so unsteady that Sir Hugh preferred to trust to his own. He bent over her tenderly, raised the pretty, languid head, and held the glass to her lips.

The girl laughed nervously, and tried to resist.

"You must drink it," the young man said tenderly, with a protecting manner that sat well upon him, and Cecil obeyed meekly, and drank a little of the wine.

Sir Hugh put down the half-emptied glass, and came back to her side.

"You are better," he said gently. "Yes, that is well; but it is too cold for you here, I am afraid."

He had taken her hands in his and held them, looking at her with very fond and tender eyes; Cecil lifted her own, and then, how it was, neither ever knew, but the next moment she was in his arms, her soft cheek, still wet with tears, was pressed to his, and Sir Hugh's voice, full of a glad, tender triumph, was uttering fond, faltering words of tenderness and joy, and his heart was throbbing passionately against her shoulder.

To both, that moment, when they stood thus heart to heart, Sir Hugh's tall head bent low over hers, Cecil's soft hand resting on his neck, was the happiest either life had ever known. All Sir Hugh's doubts and fears were set at rest, his heart was singing a glad psalm of thanksgiving: no good thing the world could give him could be so good a thing as this woman's love; and that she loved him he knew; she had tried to hide it from him vainly—that look in her eyes, the sweet black-rimmed grey eyes, was enough: it had told him so sweet a story that no word of denial would suffice to obliterate; he would never believe her again when she tried to dismiss him, when—sweet, cruel little coquette that she was—she tried to send him away.

And Cecil?

She, too, was unutterably, unspeakably happy; all was forgotten at that moment save her love for him and his love for her—her doubts, her fears, her resolves, all were at an end. Let the future bring what it would, the present was theirs, and no one could take that from them; no one should, Cecil thought recklessly, as she rested in the strong arms which held her so fondly. She had suffered so much in the past, that this happiness was her right—she would not give it up; she had tried, and the effort had almost killed her; she would keep it at any cost and against any odds. And yet, even in her happiness, a great thrill of fear, of foreboding, shook her from head to foot.

"You are cold, my darling," Sir Hugh said anxiously, feeling how the slight figure shivered in his arms. "No wonder, the night air is chill; I must take better care of my pale little sweetheart! Come, love!"

He led her away from the window, still keeping his jealous arms around her, and leaving her for a brief moment, was going to close the casement, when Cecil's voice arrested him.

"Ah, no," she said faintly; "do not shut out the night! It is so beautiful!"

Sir Hugh paused undecided.

"But you are cold, dear," he said, in the fond tone of proprietorship which made the girl's heart throb with sudden gladness. "I cannot have you taking a chill."

She smiled gently.

"I am not cold," she said, putting out her hand towards him with such a shy, pretty tenderness, that the young man hurried back to her side and caught her once more in his arms.

"But you shivered," he said tenderly.

"Did I?" she queried lightly. "It was not from cold then. Someone must have been walking over my grave."

He smiled at the old superstition, but drew her more closely to him, as if his great love resented even the lightly-uttered words.

"Nonsense!" he said fondly. "Besides, that is impossible, sweet; the church is shut up at this witching night hour."

"The church?" she said, looking up at him with a wondering little glance.

"Yes; your grave and mine, darling, will be in the church where the squires of Danecourt and their dames have been laid side by side for many a generation, and where you, the sweetest of all the Ladies Danecourt, and I, the most devoted husband of my race,—and we all make faithful husbands, dear,—you and I will be laid when our time comes long years hence. So you see, Cecil," he concluded lightly, "that no one could have been walking over your grave; because, old Holland, the clerk, is sleeping the sleep of the just at this late hour, and Allan is dining at the Hall, and wondering, I should think, where his host is."

"Yes, yes," she said tremulously, trying to disengage herself from his clasp, "they will all wonder; you ought to go, Sir Hugh."

"Ought I?" he repeated, smiling; "but then, you see, we all do things we ought not to do, and don't do what we ought; and," smiling down at her with a great tenderness, "I have so fair an excuse for my absence that they will all readily forgive it! It is no use looking grave, my dearest," he added. "I am not going yet. How do I know in what mood I may find you to-morrow;—I may come to-morrow morning, may I not?—just now, you are most sweet, most fair, and to-morrow, for aught I can tell, you may develop into the thorny little rose you are sometimes! I wish you were not such a white rose, dear," he said softly, changing his light tone into one of earnest tenderness.

"It is natural for me to be pale," she rejoined lightly; "even when I was strong, I was so."

She stood, leaning against him, her eyes uplifted to the passionate, adoring glance bent upon her, her little hand toying with the flower—a faded rose—in her button-hole. Sir Hugh, looking down upon her, felt a sudden sense of pain as he marked the extreme delicacy of her appearance; even in that blissful moment a sudden sense of dread came to him of something terrible and intangible coming between them and their happiness. She was so frail, so fragile; could it be death—her death—which should come between them and part them? At the thought the eager light faded from his blue eyes, the color from his cheek, and he drew her closely to him, jealously, almost roughly, pressing her to his heart.

"When you were strong," he repeated tenderly, yet with an anxiety he could not quite disguise, although he forced a little careless laugh, "when you were strong! When was that, dear?—somewhere in the remote ages?"

Her eyes sank beneath his glance, a faint color rose in her face; the little hand trifling with the flower and looking white as snow against the dark background of his black coat, began to tremble a little.

"It is not so very long ago," she said wistfully. "Until—until last winter, I was very well."

"Until last winter!" he repeated. "Did the cold affect you? And yet it was not a very severe winter, Cecil."

"No," she answered low; "the weather was not very severe, I think."

"You think!" he said fondly; "have you already forgotten? Never mind, my darling; if our English winters are too severe for you, I will not risk another, I will take you away. We will go southward, with the swallows, dear, and only spend the summers here."

"Oh, no! oh, no!" she said eagerly. "I will not go abroad; I would rather stay here. Oh, promise me that if I——"

"When you are my wife," he interrupted gently. "There is no 'if' in the matter, Cecil. When you are my wife you shall do exactly as you like in everything but in what concerns your health and welfare. You must let me take care of you."

"But it was not the cold made ill," she said hurriedly. "I had a fever which left me very weak. Hugh," she put her hand on his shoulder, coloring slightly as she uttered his name for the first time without its formal prefix, "you will give me my own way in this? I can never be so happy anywhere; I have never been so happy anywhere as I have been at Danecourt!"

Sir Hugh's face glowed with pleasure.

"Is that so?" he said simply. "Those are pleasant words to hear, my darling. And you are better, too, are not you, since you came? And now that you will let me take you out for those rides and drives you have hitherto put your veto upon, you will gain strength rapidly."

"Yes, oh, yes: you need not be anxious," she said earnestly, and then with a pretty shy gesture of tenderness she rested her pretty head against him, and the short silken yellow locks strayed upon the black coat like threads of gold. "You know, they say," she went on shyly, "that happiness is the best and most efficacious tonic, and I am so happy."

"Really?" the young man said eagerly. "Really happy, Cecil? And I can help to make that happiness?"

"Help?" she whispered; "not help, Hugh; you make that happiness."

"Is that indeed so, my beloved?" he queried, almost afraid that this was not a happy dream from which he would awake by and by, yet with a passionate tenderness flooding his soul and irradiating his handsome face. "Ah, if you could know, in your turn, what sunshine you have brought into my life."

"Have I?" she whispered, the lovely color rushing to her face and tinting it like the heart of a blush rose. "Oh, Hugh! how glad I am! almost too glad," she added. "To happy for it to last!"

"But it shall last, Cecil," he said fondly, and reassuringly. "Why should it not? It—our happiness—will only increase by the passing time. It can only increase, dear, when we are together; and nothing shall ever part us, Cecil. Nothing!"

All the pretty color had faded from her face now. She was pale, and there was a strange look in the downcast eyes which Sir Hugh could not see.

"That is for you to say," she whispered, and suddenly, with a little frightened movement, she hid her face upon his breast, and clung to him.

He laughed, a little soft, glad laugh, as his arms closed around her.

"Ah, you see," he said gaily; "the thought of parting is as unpleasant to you as it is to me, Madame Cecil. I am afraid," he continued half ruefully, "that we shall be a very spoony couple, and a nuisance to everybody but ourselves! Poor Nannie, what a time she will have of it," he added, laughing. "By the way, dear, you will not mind Nannie, will you? Jessie, I imagine, will soon be taking wing from the old home."

"Mind Nannie!" Cecil said almost indignantly. "She is the sweetest and dearest of women! I love her."

"And she loves you," he interpolated. "I think I could not give her a sister whom she loves better, Cecil."

"And—and——"

"And what, dear?" he queried, as he looked down at the beautiful eyes which for a moment were raised to his."

"And—and Miss Butler?"

"Constance? What of her, dear? Does not my handsome cousin find favor in your eyes?"

"She is very handsome, is she not?" Cecil said wistfully, looking up into his face.

"I suppose so," he said carelessly. "I believe she is considered so by some people."

"How was it that——"

Cecil began, then paused shyly.

"That what, dear?"

"That living in the same house with her, you did not fall in love with her?"

"With Constance?" Sir Hugh echoed, throwing back his handsome head and laughing gaily. "What an absurd notion! My dear child, why did I not fall in love with Nannie or Jessie?"

"They are your sisters. She is your cousin," Cecil said in a low tone.

Again the young man laughed gaily, his laughter ringing through the quiet room in which they stood together; Cecil's head still lying in loving abandon on his shoulder, her silken tresses straying loosely upon his coat.

"Pray had you ever a cousin, Tom?
Did your cousin happen to sing?
Sisters we have by the dozen, Tom,
But a cousin's a different thing!"

he quoted gaily. "Is that what you mean, you little goose? It would have seemed quite as much within the realms of possibility for me to fall in love with Nannie as with Constance."

"I think she does not like me," Cecil said in a low tone.

"Which is a mark of very bad taste on her part," Sir Hugh replied smiling. "What of it, dear? Constance is not a fixture at the Hall."

"She will not live there if——" Cecil began, looking up eagerly.

"'If' again," he said chidingly. "What a doubting heart you have, Cecil. Why do you not say 'when,' instead of that little doubting 'if?' No, of course she will not live at the Hall 'when' we are are married, dear."

A little faint sigh of relief came from Cecil's lips; Sir Hugh, hearing it, mistook the cause.

"You are tired," he said anxiously. "I am tiring you, keeping you standing here. How thoughtless of me. It must be getting late. By jove!"—looking at his watch—"it is getting late! I must leave you, my darling."

"Must you go?" she said slowly, lingeringly, disengaging herself from his arms, which were so reluctant to let her go.

"I may come again to-morrow morning?" he asked anxiously. "Mrs. Geith will not forbid me the house, Cecil?"

"Of course you may come."

"Early—very early?" he queried coaxingly; "to breakfast?"

Cecil smiled.

"Even to breakfast, if you like," she said lightly.

"Thanks for so gracious a permission," he said laughingly. "Oh, Cecil, I wish the time had come when we need not part even for a few short hours! Let it be soon, dear?" he pleaded earnestly. "You will not try my patience too much!"

"Your patience?" Cecil repeated lifting her eyebrows enquiringly.

"Ah, you doubt its existence?" he said, laughing. "Saucy child! And yet you should not, since you have tried it more than anyone else in all this wide world!"

"I?" Cecil said wonderingly.

"Even you!" he replied. "Do you not know how badly you have behaved to me during all these six weeks sometimes raising me to the seventh heaven, and at others reducing me to the lowest depths of despair? Three or four times I made up my mind to run away, to put the sea between us, so that I should not be tormented by the sight of you! Yet something, some look in your eyes, some tone in your voice, always kept me here at your mercy! Even to-night," he went on, with tender reproach, "but that your strength was not equal to your cruelty, you would have sent me away broken-hearted! Why were you so cruel, sweetheart? Did you want to see how great your power was, and to what a pitiable state of subjection you had reduced me?"

She looked at him with a strange expression; her lips were very pale, although she smiled.

"I wanted to send you away," she said quietly, but in a very low tone.

"To send me away? And why?" he asked, in surprise.

"Because—because—oh, for a score of reasons!"

"Give me one," he urged smilingly.

She hesitated a moment, then her eyes fell under his laughing glance.

"My unworthiness," she answered, in a low voice,

"If the other nineteen are as good reasons as that one," he replied with a merry little laugh, "I am not surprised that you hesitate to enumerate them—I can dispense with them. Unworthy! You!" He caught her in his arms with sudden passion. "Is there a man on earth worthy of you, my pure white rose? What have I done to be so blessed?"

He bent his head over her for a moment with a few earnest, whispered words of thanksgiving; and the girl in his arms trembled from head to foot as he held her to his heart and thanked Heaven for the love which she felt would be his great curse.

Then he slowly released her.

"I must go, love," he said regretfully; "your sister will be coming home, and my discourtesy and neglect of my guests will be manifold. Good-night—good-bye, my own—until to-morrow."

"Until to-morrow," she repeated almost inaudibly. "You will come to-morrow, Hugh?"

"To-morrow, and the next day, and the next," he answered fondly; "until that blessed day when I shall come and take you away with me, never to let you go again! You will let it be soon, my dear Cecil?"

"Ah, do not think of that to-night," she said faintly. "Let us be happy without any thought of the future, which may hold either joy or trouble for us both."

"Only joy," he said tenderly. "Once more, good-night, my own."

He released her from his close clasp, and she went with him towards the window, which was still open. The summer night was very beautiful; the stars shone palely in the calm sky, the air was full of fragrance—of the scent of the dying flowers, which give forth their richest sweetness before they die; the faint silvery light of the young moon fell tenderly on both faces, and brightened the gleam of satin in the folds of Cecil's soft, trailing gown.

As they stepped out upon the terrace he took the two little hands and looked down into his eyes with a tender enquiry in his own.

Reading that enquiry a startled glance crept into her own.

"What is it?" she said breathlessly.

"Do you not know," he rejoined gently, "that while you have listened to all my assurances of affection, that while I have told you again and again how dear you are to me, how much I love you, you have never once said to me, in so many words, that you, in your turn, loved me?"

The startled glance died out of her eyes; evidently the question was not what she feared it might be.

"Have not I?" she queried softly.

"No. And I should like—it is a folly, perhaps, but I am in a condition to-night, which in any one else I should contemplate with compassionate disgust at such weakness, but which, under these circumstances, I consider wisdom in me. I should like to hear you say so, Cecil, with your own sweet lips."

She hesitated a moment—a minute, then lifting her white arms, she put them round his neck.

"I love you!" she said in low voice, full of tenderness and truth. "I love you."

"My darling, my beloved!" Sir Hugh exclaimed passionately, straining her to his heart with a passion that startled her, then gently he put her from him. "Now run away in, my dearest, he said lightly. "You will be taking cold."

"Ah, let me see you go, Hugh," she said simply, as a child might have done. "And before you go," she added slyly, "tell me once more that you love me."

"As my life," he answered earnestly, "I love you, Cecil."

Then he turned from her, repeating his tender injunction to go in out of the chill night air, and strode away, running lightly down the stone steps of the terrace, and turning when he had reached the lawn, to wave her a last good-bye, and take with him the picture that last look showed him.

The girl stood where he had left her, the soft moonlight lingering fondly about the folds of her white dress, her eyes bright with sudden unshed tears.

Perhaps the moonlight showed him those bright drops, for he ran lightly back, and caught her hands again in his.

"Cecil, there are tears in your eyes," he said softly.

"They are glad tears then," she answered gently.

"Really glad?"

"Yes."

"And you really love me?"

The sweet eyes were raised to his, and even through the bright tear-drops the great love shining in their depths was visible.

"With my whole heart!" she answered steadfastly, in a low tone clear as a silver bell.

He stooped his tall head over her hands in silence, and then with that sweet assurance ringing in his ears he went away into the quiet fragrant night, hurrying homewards, his heart warm with gladness and joy such as he had never known.

Cecil stood until the dark figure had disappeared, and she was left alone with the sighing of the leaves, as the soft air rustled them, and the fragrance of the dying roses, then suddenly she seemed to awake as if some painful thought had roused her. She looked about her with startled eyes, and lifted both her little shaking hands to her head with a gesture of pain and fear.

"What have I done?" she cried out aloud. "What have I done?"

But only the clustering roses and the tall white lilies heard, and they answered nothing.

CHAPTER IX.

THE day was very hot even for July, that month into which and August the heat of our year seems crowded. There was not a breath of air in the full leaved trees; the flowers drooped their graceful heads under the ardent gaze of the sun which flooded the earth and sky, pouring its strong beams with strict impartiality; the sky was cloudless, serene and beautiful, and yet one could not help thinking that its beauty would have been more pleasing had it been overshadowed even by a few little cloudlets, and Hugh Danecourt thought longingly of the cool blue sea lapping the shores of the little village so short a distance away.

All the world seemed asleep on that sultry afternoon, no living thing seemed to be moving among the trees or flowers; even the birds, usually so restless in their fluttering here and there, were quiescent. At the Gate House the sun blinds were all drawn, shutting out the sun's glare, and the rooms were as cool as it was possible to make them, but even Mrs. Geith, accustomed as she was to Indian heat, was overpowered by the sultriness which reigned in the atmosphere, and perhaps missing the punkah and its refreshing influence, was nodding drowsily over the novel in whose company she was sitting in the shaded drawing room.

Down by the brook which rippled through the little wood, with which the grounds belonging to the Gate House was bounded, the Squire of Danecourt had found himself a comfortable sylvan couch of moss and grass, and was waiting patiently enough for Cecil to join him there. His straw hat was tilted over his eyes, his hands were clasped behind his handsome head, and his shapely limbs were stretched at ease in the pretty little clearing in the wood where he and Cecil had spent so many happy hours since their engagement had been un fait accompli.

That engagement was a month old now: four weeks had elapsed since Cecil had tried to send her lover away from her, and her strength had failed her in the attempt; four happy, cloudless, blissful weeks to Hugh Danecourt, and almost as happy to the woman who knew for the first time in her life the blessedness of mutual love,—almost, yet not quite, for even in her happiest moments Cecil's face would pale, and her eyes grow full of fear and anxiety and dread.

Even had Hugh wished to conceal his love from his sisters and the cousin who, since her father's death, had lived at the Hall, he could not have done so. He was, as Jessie said merrily; ridiculously happy! There was no mistaking the glad expectation on his face, which showed that he looked forward to the bliss the day held for him, the tender little lovelight in his eyes, the happy tone of the musical, deep voice.

His sisters sympathised heartily and sincerely in his happiness; they admired and liked Cecil; whether she had money or no was a matter of supreme indifference to them: Sir Hugh could afford to marry a dowerless bride an' it pleased him. Miss Butler's congratulations had been charmingly expressed, and Hugh was too true himself to doubt their truth and sincerity, and if Anne Danecourt did so, she did not impart her doubt to her brother.

Certainly Constance's relationship, and her sisterly intimacy, warranted her in taking sufficient interest in her cousin's projected alliance to excuse her if her questions about Cecil Lestrange to both Anne and her brother were rather searching.

But Sir Hugh frankly and carelessly avowed that he knew hardly anything, and cared to know no more, of his fiancee's antecedents. She was gently born and bred, that was evident, and, better still, she was good, true, pure and sweet as any woman could be, and that was enough for him, Sir Hugh said, smiling as he thanked his cousin for her interest.

And Constance, smiling also, yet with jealous anger burning in her heart, uttered a few words of graceful commendation of Cecil's beauty, and dropped the subject and bided her time.

But the person who received the news of the engagement most quietly was Mrs. Geith. She had hesitated most strangely when Cecil had told her of it, on her return from Danecourt Hall, and for a long hour or more the sisters were closeted together in Mrs. Geith's bedroom, and Cecil left it pale and tremulous, yet with a defiant look on her fair face; but whatever had been Mrs. Geith's reasons for disapproving of the engagement, they had not been sufficiently strong to induce Cecil to draw back. Only in the early dawn of the next day she had crept into her sister's room, and waited there until she awoke, and as their eyes had met, the younger woman had whispered tremulously.

"Let me be happy for a little while, Laura! Let me be happy while I can! Let me be happy while I can!"

And Mrs. Geith had caught her in her arms and they had cried together, and when Sir Hugh came to breakfast—handsome, eager, radiant—Laura had given him a kind little smile, and a sisterly pressure of the hand. And so it seemed for once as if the course of true love would run smooth, and so contradict the assertion of one of England's wisest men.

It was very hot; the sun was riding high in the cloudless heavens, the brook murmured sleepily as it trickled over the stones, the mosses bending touched it with their drooping fronds; all around the vegetation, profuse and beautiful as it is only in Daleshire, seemed slumbering in the heat.

The young man, lying there at his ease, with his straw hat tilted over his closed eyes, was almost slumbering also, when there came a soft rustle through the grasses, which, slight as it was, sufficed to rouse him.

He sprang up, ungratefully throwing aside his straw hat, and hurried forward to meet Cecil, with outstretched hands and smiling, eager eyes.

"She is coming my own, my sweet:
Were it ever so easy a tread,
My heart would hear her and beat,
Were it earth to an earthly bed."

he quoted fondly as the girl put her hands into his; slim little hands which were no longer ringless, but blazing with diamonds and sapphires of great value and beauty, his gifts, until the little fingers seemed too fragile to bear the weight of gems with which they were laden.

"Would it, I wonder?" the girl said wistfully. "Ah, what a foolish question," she added lightly. "Rather I should wonder if my dust would hear you come, for your footstep is heavier than mine, and your life will be, oh, so much longer."

Sir Hugh shook his handsome head, but though he still smiled, a shadow, slight, but still perceptible, had crept into his blue eyes. Lightly as she had spoken, her words had touched a painful chord; Cecil's fragile appearance was always a source of anxiety to him.

"Not likely, dear," he said, smiling at her tenderly; "we are not a long-lived race."

"Are not you? Yet you look so strong, Hugh. Nonsense; you will live to be a very old man, with snow-white hair."

He laughed.

"I have no objection, darling," he said gaily, "so long as you sit opposite to me in your chimney corner, I shall be quite content."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

DURING the cross-examination of a false witness at the Central Criminal Court the other day, the prosecuting lawyer asked him where his father was, to which the witness, with a melancholy air responded, "Dead, sir; dropped off very suddenly, sir." "How came he to drop off suddenly?" "Foul play, sir; the sheriff imposed on his unsuspicious nature, sir, and getting him to go up on a platform to take a look at a select audience, suddenly knocked a trap door out from under him, sir."

Bric-a-Brac.

CHINESE CHILDREN.—Chinese parents are afraid to give their children the fine high-sounding names their love suggests, lest the evil spirits, of whom they stand in constant fear, should come to understand how precious they are and cause them some calamity. And so the foreign resident constantly meets with children answering to the names of Little Stupid, Vagabond Flea, and the like, the idea being that, when the spirits hear the little ones called by such uncomplimentary names, they will imagine that the parents care very little for them, and will not take the trouble to molest them.

A LOVING WIFE.—Artemisia, sister and wife of Mausolus, king of an Asiatic kingdom, married her own brother, famous for his personal beauty. She was so fond of her husband, that at his death she drank in her liquor his ashes, after his body had been burned, and erected to his memory a monument, which, for its grandeur and magnificence, was called one of the seven wonders of the world. This monument she called "Mausoleum," a name which has been given to all monuments of unusual splendor. She invited all the literary men of her age, and proposed rewards to him who composed the best elegiac panegyric upon her husband.

THE DHERNA.—Among the customs of the Hindus, there is one which is called "Dherna." If a man demands satisfaction from his neighbor for some grievous offence—if a creditor determines to pursue extreme measures with his debtor, to obtain what is due to him—if a relative has been cheated by another out of his patrimony or his rights, and wishes to exact them they respectively take the poniard or a cup of poison in their hand, and knowing that the offending party is at home, they sit down at his door in dherna. That moment the defendant within is considered as under arrest. He cannot touch food, so long as his accuser continues to fast; and, should he not come to terms, but drive, by his obstinacy, the plaintiff to despair, and allow him to use the dagger or drink the poison, his blood rests upon his head. This may be termed their "ordeal"—their mode of demanding satisfaction—their system of duelling—their last resort.

WHY THE CROW IS BLACK.—The Indians of the extreme Northwest had some very remarkable legends about the creation, in which the crow takes the leading part, bringing order out of chaos. Perhaps the most curious was that which accounted for the raven coat of the crow. One night, while making a tour through his dominions, he stopped at the house of Can-nock, a chief, and begged for lodging and a drink of water. Can-nock offered him a bed, but, on account of the scarcity of water, refused to give him anything to drink. When all the rest were asleep the crow got up to hunt for the water-butt, but was heard by Can-nock's wife, who aroused her husband. He, thinking that the crow was about to escape, piled logs of gum wood upon the fire. The crow made desperate effort to fly through the hole in the roof where the smoke escaped but Can-nook caused the smoke to be denser and denser, and when the crow finally regained the outer air he had black plumage. It was previously white.

ORIGIN OF FASHIONS.—The origin of many fashions was in the endeavor to conceal some deformity of the inventor; hence the cushions, ruffs, hoops, and other monstrous devises. If a reigning beauty chanced to have an unequal hip, those who had very handsome hips, would load them with false ones which the others was compelled by the unkindness of nature to substitute. Patches were invented in England in the reign of Edward VI by a foreign lady, who in this manner ingeniously covered a wen on her neck. When the Spectator wrote, full-bottomed wigs were invented by a French barber, one Duviller, whose name they perpetuated, for the purpose of concealing an elevation in the shoulder of the Dauphin. Charles VII of France introduced long coats to hind his ill-made legs. Shoes with very long points, full two feet in length, were invented by Henry Plantagenet Duke of Anjou, to conceal a large excrescence on one of his feet. When Francis I was obliged to wear his short hair, owing to a wound he received in his head, it became a prevailing fashion at court. Others on the contrary adapted fashions to set off their peculiar beauties, as Isabella of Bavaria, remarkable for her gallantry, and the fairness of her complexion, introduced the fashion of leaving the shoulders and part of the neck uncovered.

TWENTY-ONE.

BY MRS. G. LINNÆUS BANKS.

Hush! 'tis a solemn hour,
The hour before the morning,
When girlhood flies for aye
At the first blush of dawning:
Flies with all girlish things,
Hopes and imaginings,
On fleet, retreating wings!

Flies, never to return,
Yet drops a tear in flying,
A benediction sweet
As blessing from the dying,
On the new woman made
In sunshine and in shade,
No duty to evade.

A woman free to act—
Thinking, willing, doing:
Living the lovely life
No other life is ruling:
A woman, with the might
Of gentleness bedight,
Love's sceptre, shield, and light.

Like to worn garments drop
Thy years of girlhood twenty;
The veil of twenty-one
Comes gemmed with promise plenty;
The pearls of hope and prayer,
For all things good and fair,
And life with little care.

Then may'st not note the change
When girlhood spreads her pinions;
The frontier is unseen
Of womanhood's dominions;
But if thy girlhood brought
High act and noble thought,
Step forward—fear thou naught!

A FLOWER OF FATE

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WILD WARRINGTONS," "LIKE LOST SHEEP," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

AND are you, pray, aware," she went on almost angrily, ignoring my reply, "that the nursing sisters of the Convent of St. Cordelia are all of them gentlewomen with means, more or less, of their own (the Sister Dorothea who came to you in Bentham Street is a very rich woman—a woman of title; I believe Mr. Eversleigh knew her before she joined the sisterhood), and that it is from a pure love of good and Christian work that they go about nursing whithersoever duty calls them; that they do not turn from the worst of slums or shrink in their ministering from the most loathsome of diseases? Their world, in fact, is the sick-room. Death to them is more familiar than life."

"I know all that, dear," I interpolated gently.

"But," said Aurora grimly, "there are others in that Sisterhood of St. Cordelia—if I am speaking too bluntly, you must forgive me, Flower—the poorer sisters who have been permitted to join the community, but who are yet without private means of any kind. These, I have heard, are expected to do the work—the menial work—of the place; and I have also heard that they never put their noses outside the convent gates from the end of one year to that of another. This perhaps you do not know?"

"Yes, Aurora; I know that too," I said resignedly; "and it is one of those poor hard-working sisters who are never seen beyond the convent walls that I mean—I should say, that I long to be—always supposing they will consent to have me among them. Poor as I am, I could expect nothing higher; and such complete seclusion will suit me exactly. Daryl will never find me there."

With a movement of strong irritation Lady Tracy lowered her lace sunshade, and shut it with a snap.

"Their dress is something too frightful!" she fumed. "It is hideous enough to frighten the crows. What you will look like in it I fail altogether to conceive. It's too much for my imagination. Oh, Flower," cried she, "I am so disappointed in you! I never, never could have believed that you would take such a wild crotchet into your head! It is too wild—too absurd! We might have been so happy all our lives together if you would only have had the sense to see it!"

She was still doing her utmost to shake my resolve, bringing many a blunt and vigorous argument to bear upon the vexed question, when we drove into the grounds of Arley Bridge.

Having alighted from the carriage and entered the hall, Lady Tracy inquired of the servant who had opened the door whether his lordship had returned from town.

"No, my lady, he has not," the young man replied.

"Has any one called in my absence?" asked Aurora then.

"Yes, my lady—a gentleman," answered the man, who, I fancy, at that date had been only a few days in Lord Tracy's service. "He arrived about an hour ago; but, hearing that neither you, my lady, nor his lordship was at home, he said he would wait until you came in. I showed him, at his request, into the library, and gave him the daily papers."

"What is his name?" inquired the Viscountess quickly, pausing as she moved across the hall to glance over her shoulder at the man-servant.

And to me, at any rate, his answer came like a thunderbolt.

"Mr. Eversleigh, my lady," said he.

* * * * * *

Leigh Eversleigh at Arley Bridge!

The Viscountess, herself not in the least astonished at the servant's answer, turned and put another question to the young man; but I do not know what it was.

I stayed to hear no more, but, without once looking round, I walked straight up to my two pleasant rooms, locked the bedroom door, and flung myself down upon my dressing-room sofa.

Many a confused and painful thought was hurrying through my brain; the unlooked-for arrival of Mr. Eversleigh somehow sorely troubled me.

The news of his presence in the house had filled me with a curious sense of unrest, of dismay, of vague unsettledness: and, as I lay prone there amongst the silken sofa-cushions, I was suddenly possessed of a longing to escape from the peace and quiet of Arley Bridge.

Yet whither, at a moment's notice, should I flee?

However, common sense soon came to my aid; and I smothered down the small voice that was whispering within me and inciting me to so foolish a course.

How long I had been lying motionless upon the couch in my dressing-room I had not the faintest idea; but daylight, I could see, was fading, and a soft sapphire twilight was coming on.

Hark! Yes—the shrill little clock upon my bed-room mantelpiece was striking seven, and there was some one tapping at and rattling and the handle of the farther door.

"It is only I," called out Aurora. "May I not come in?"

To myself I supposed wearily that there was no help for it; and with a stifled sigh I arose to admit the brisk Viscountess.

She came in full of animation; and I perceived directly that she had put on her dinner-gown—a lovely pale peach-colored satin with festoons of gossamer-like lace throat to them, and a close-encircling necklace of twisted seed-pearls for her sole ornament.

"Gracious, Flower—what, all in the dark, or nearly so?" she cried. "You really must hurry along, my dear; we dine a little earlier than usual this evening; for Loftus has got back from town, and has got back too as hungry as the proverbial hunter. Come," observed Aurora—"let us shed a little light upon the scene; you cannot see to dress in the dark, Flower!"

Speaking, she moved swiftly to and fro and lighted the candles in both rooms.

"There," said she—"now look alive, my dear!"

I had returned meanwhile to the sofa.

"My head aches badly, Aurora," I said in a pleading tone. "Please don't ask me to join you at dinner. I cannot come down this evening."

She looked at me quickly, and not without vexation.

I believe she knew that I was not uttering the strict truth.

"This is tiresome, Flower," she said; "for Mr. Eversleigh dines and sleeps to-night at Arley Bridge——"

"What," I interrupted involuntarily, but in a faint enough voice—"you have—have invited him to—to stay?"

"Certainly I have," replied Aurora. "Why not, pray? In reality, he simply called—called indeed to see how you were progressing, to ascertain what strides you had made upon the high-road to health, and so forth; and you have made strides, you know, my dear friend, though you are rather reluctant to admit it! Hitherto, whenever Mr. Eversleigh has dined here, he has remained with us for the night; and on this occasion also he has consented to be our guest until the morning."

"Well, I can't see him yet," I said querulously.

"I suppose—nay, I hope—that you will, though, be well enough to come down by-and-by? A cup of tea may cure the headache," said Aurora gravely.

"If you do not mind, I should like the tea now, Aurora," I suggested meekly.

"Of course; but you must have some dinner too. I shall send Emilia up with it," answered Lady Tracy promptly.

"Oh, Aurora," I rejoined petulantly, "do you not comprehend, or will you not? My head is bad—really bad. How can one eat dinner with a bad headache?"

"One can't, I know, with some headaches," said the Viscountess drily. "I didn't understand, Flower, that yours was of that inconvenient kind."

"Well, it is; and tea is all that I want—so please send up nothing besides," I told her wearily.

My friend was shrewd, perhaps occasionally too shrewd, and it was difficult at any time to deceive her.

She laughed pleasantly as she turned to go, saying—

"Oh, very well! Nevertheless it won't do to have you shutting yourself up here to starve. Recollect that you are an invalid, and want feeding up and looking after."

With that she went; and I fancied I was left in peace.

But the next moment Aurora again popped her fair head into the room, to say—

"Be sure you come down presently if you can. Perhaps when the men have got rid of me I may run up and fetch you."

She smiled, nodded brightly, and then she really did go.

Aurora's visit had thoroughly dispelled my physical languor. I could no longer lie passive, nursing my gloomy thought. Emilia, too, the Viscountess's own maid, had appeared with the tea.

It was very strong; and it had refreshed, cleared my brain, and had restirred it to increased activity.

I rose, laved my hot forehead and hands in some toilet-vinegar and water, and began to pace restlessly from one room to the other.

The house seemed unusually quiet; they must by this time, I thought, be shut in the dining-room.

Sighing, I went to one of the windows and looked out.

The dusk had deepened to an amethyst gloom; the sward of the park was silvered lightly with dew; the moon, pale as a primrose, was rising above the black plantation which hid from gaze the village church of Arley.

To-day I had had no opportunity of going to the churchyard; and seldom, since I had been living in Lord Tracy's house, had a day gone by without my visiting—alone, but carrying with me beautiful flowers from the Arley Bridge conservatory—the little grave of my lost Isla.

It was late, true; but I could very well go thither at this hour.

I should be missed by no one, and could easily get back to the house before Lady Tracy quitted the dining-room.

In my wardrobe there was a black-silk cloak lined with minever, hood and all.

It wrapped me snugly from head to foot; and I had often worn it of a night on my omnibus journeys in London, when jolting from Mrs. Sadler's lodgings down to Mr. Rinkworthy's theatre of varieties.

I put on now this warm silk cloak, noiselessly left my room, and crept downstairs to a garden door at the end of the library passage.

The lighted windows of the dining-room did not look in this direction; all the same, I hurried nervously through the misty grounds, as if vigilant eyes were in the rear of me and my movements were being observed.

Once or twice I fancied that I was followed by some one, that footsteps brushed the grass behind me; but, when I glanced half fearfully around me, there was nothing anywhere visible save the trees, their shadows, and the moonlight which gave such fantastic shapes to them.

Overhead the clear white stars were thickening; a breath of wind travelled mournfully through the dark plantation boughs.

It did not take me many minutes, by the narrow winding path across the park, to reach the lonely wicket in the churchyard wall; moreover, by this time it had become familiar ground to me—and familiar ground is quickly traversed.

Arley church itself was a low gray building, with a short square tower three-parts clad with ivy.

It was very sheltered, very silent; all around it, closely packed, lay the happy dead.

Here and there a mausoleum or a costly tombstone stood out conspicuously from amidst its lowlier neighbors; but the many graves were for the most part unmarked by cross or headstone—the few humble devices in wood, scattered widely apart, were all silent and neglected and green with decay.

In a remote corner, the least crowded of any, where ivy topped the low flint wall of the churchyard, as well as the tower of the church; where a spreading yew cast its cool and solemn shadow, and the periwinkles clustered and trailed in profusion over a hillock of big gray mossy stones flung there and forgotten, perhaps, in years gone by; where, in the springtime, violets both purple and white might be found in hiding amongst the moss, and daffodils lifted their heavy yellow heads to nod them bell-like in the west wind—here, at rest, in this sweet and shady spot, lay Isla, my child, my darling, who was not really lost to me, but only "gone before"—in all the wide world the solitary human tie that once had rendered life truly dear to me!

Marking the place where the kind earth covered her, where the shorn turf grew greenly over the little mound, stood a slender marble cross, pure, chaste, cold, white as unsullied snow.

Upon it, in letters of gold, were engraven her simple name, her brief span of life; and, beneath her dear name, those bright words of the Good Shepherd which are as balm to the heart of every grieving mother not yet grown old in motherhood—

"In loving memory of Isla Darkwood, aged five years. 'Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God.'"

Time, merciful as it ever is, had softened the first sharp agony of my loss; and I could now kneel in silence and without tears by the grave—by the earthly resting-place—of my little angel.

My faith, thank Heaven, was strong; and I knew that an hour must come—it might be near, it might be far off, but sooner or later that hour would surely come—when Isla and I should meet again—meet again, never more to be parted from each other!

"Be patient," I would whisper to myself in those melancholy days—"be patient—have courage; and the child as you knew her and loved her in life will be yours once more! Unless," I used to think very sorrowfully sometimes, "it be that we grow old in heaven!"

The night was warm, notwithstanding the low-lying mist and the fallen dew; an early bat, or some other grim winged creature of the darkness, swept by the churchyard wall.

Plaintively across the dim fields from a distant farm-shed came the lowing of cattle, the faint "tinkle-tinkle" of a sheep-bell; weirdly peeped the primrose moon through the black and lvied belfry bars.

The flowers that I had yesterday brought hither were not yet withered; in the moonlit gloom, with the dew upon them, they were faintly fragrant still.

Close-wrapped in my long cloak, with the hood of it drawn over my cropped hair, which I used pensively to fancy would never grow again, I sank upon my knees by the slender marble cross and wound my arms desolately about it.

Chill as death's touch itself it struck to my brow, ice-cold as the dawn-wind of a winter morn.

And yet, as I knelt there, a great peace, a sense of infinite calm and gratitude, seemed to steal over my heart—nay, to fill my whole being—and prayer was in that sad heart of mine, if not upon my lips.

Perhaps, after all—who shall tell?—I was thankful that Isla was indeed at rest, out of the reach of all earthly suffering; that life's bitter sorrows and manifold disappointments could never touch her now, never touch her more!

Ah, would that I too were there, and at peace, beyond the eternal stars, in heaven with my darling—that my future were as safe as hers!

Our spirits—my child's and my own—in such an hour as this were always very near together, although I was still a pilgrim upon earth and she was "at home with God."

* * * * *

A hand, with infinite gentleness, touched my bowed head lingeringly; and, in momentary dumb terror, I started to my feet.

There in the moonlight, by the little new grave, stood Leigh Eversleigh.

"Lady Tracy told me that I should find you here," he said, just as kindly and as quietly as if we had parted only on the day before. "It is late, Mrs. Darkwood; the grass hereabout is very long and damp, you know. Will you not come home?"

And so it was—by Isla's white cross in Arley churchyard, that I and Leigh Eversleigh met again.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

IT was several minutes ere I could recover my lost self-command.

Had it been broad day, instead of the time it chanced to be, Mr. Eversleigh must have perceived into what a state of embarrassment and agitation his sudden appearance there in Arley churchyard had thrown me. But perhaps the uncomfortable fact was not unmarked by him; I cannot say. I felt strangely glad to see him again, and yet strangely miserable; no soul save myself could divine how I had dreaded this encounter with Leigh.

One thing however was evident—he was striving his utmost, with conventional and commonplace inquiries as to my health and its present amendment, to render the meeting smooth and easy for both of us. The embarrassment, the constraint, on my part, went far towards making his task a by no means inconsiderable one. Finding him thus unexpected by the grave of my child had sorely perturbed me.

I did not offer him my hand—I could not—I hardly knew why.

Remembering all that Daryl had told me on that terrible night at Thongate—the confession, the cruel and unmanly confession, was verily scorched into my memory—was it right that I should greet him, Leigh Eversleigh, even as a friend? And yet how good, how kind, how nobly generous he had been—had ever been to me! What was right? What ought I to do? Which was the right course for me to adopt—for me, Daryl Darkwood's wife?

In silence, with a full and an aching heart, I turned from the little grave, Mr. Eversleigh in silence following me. By the lonely wicket in the low flint wall I halted, glanced at him timidly, hesitated, then said, in a voice tremulous beyond my control—

"I should like to thank you, if I could, for all that you have done for me; it has been so much—so much! Ah, believe me, I know it; but—but to-night I am afraid that I cannot. You must wait; you have taken me unawares; I—I am not yet so strong as I was; I—I——"

I could not continue; I broke down utterly in my incoherent essay. I wrung my hands beneath my cloak, shivering in the soft and ghostly light of that quiet place.

"Try to realise, Mrs. Darkwood," he was saying calmly enough himself, "that there is indeed no occasion to thank me. Aught that I have found it within my power to do, any true friend, any friend worthy the name, would readily have——"

"Yes, the truest of friends—that. In truth you have been; I own it now! I interrupted a little wildly, and checked myself again.

"Please say no more," Leigh entreated—"it is so entirely unnecessary. Do you know, I came to Arley Bridge to-day with the express purpose of seeing you—you alone, before any one; because I—I have a suggestion to put before you that touches your future, Mrs. Darkwood," he said rather wistfully; "and something which Lady Tracy has this evening been telling me about your plans makes me trust—in fact, most sincerely hope—that you will give the idea your earnest consideration. Weigh it well, will you, when you have heard what it is?"

"Stay—a moment; there are a few questions I should like to ask you," I began hurriedly. I leaned against the wall as I spoke; I was very tired; I needed a prop of some kind. Time had been when I should have asked him for the aid of his arm; now it was impossible, I told myself drearily. "You will answer me?" said I.

"Certainly," he replied courteously—I

fancied somehow coldly. "But do you not think that it would be wiser for us to return at once to the house? I do not forget that you have been very ill: I cannot allow you to forget it either."

"I shall not hurt," I told him, with a brusquerie which was wholly due—I understood it afterwards—to intense nervousness.

Heaven knows that I had no desire to treat with graceless incivility this good and rare friend of mine; but gradually the conviction was taking firm hold of me that this man in the churchyard, standing there with me in the pale moonlight, was not—emphatically not—the Leigh Eversleigh whom I used to know! A change was plainly discernible in him.

He was as kind, as courteous, as friendly as of yore; but something was wrong somewhere.

Was it that his manner lacked the geniality, the winning warmth which had characterized it and had made it such a pleasant manner in the days that were gone?

And yet—and yet what was that wild bad tale that Daryl, in his cups, had told me at Thangate? . . . Ninety-nine women out of a hundred are notoriously inconsistent; and this indefinable change in Leigh Eversleigh irritated me curiously.

Well, if he could grow cold, I could freeze; but never—Heaven help me!—would I be ungrateful to him.

"Where is Daryl?" I demanded abruptly.

"He is abroad," Mr. Eversleigh replied gently.

"Abroad—where?"

"He is staying somewhere in the Saxon Switzerland region, at the Schloss of that friend of his, Herr von Rosenberg. The castle, I've heard, is romantically situated; and Darkwood, I believe, intends to utilise his opportunities—to turn the magnificent scenery amidst which at the present time he is living to substantial account."

"That is so very likely, is it not?" I observed bitterly. "Of course you gave him the money to go? He could not have gone without money."

After a brief pause, Leigh answered quietly—

"I lent him the money, Mrs. Darkwood—yes."

"You gave it to him," I repeated, obstinately and gloomily.

Ever so slightly Mr. Eversleigh shrugged his shoulders, and so let the contradiction pass.

"And—and this, now," I said, my voice growing once more faint and unsteady. "It was you, was it not, who caused that beautiful white cross to—to be placed over Isla's grave?"

"Yes," he answered quite simply, "it was I. Why not?"

"Ah, no, no—I cannot have it thus!" I cried brokenly. "It must not be!"

"Really I cannot comprehend why you should raise any objection, Mrs. Darkwood. In life I loved the child very dearly; and I believe the little one loved me. To do what I did was to me a sorrowful pleasure that I should take it very hard and cruel of you in any wise to spoil. I do pray you to let things remain as they are," he said earnestly. "I shall feel hurt, deeply wounded, if you insist upon interfering in matters that, please understand, were long ago settled and done with. I shall begin to fancy else that you mistrust our friendship; that—that you do not believe in the spirit of it as heartily as you once used to do."

He spoke with a sad gravity which seemed to go straight to my heart and pierce it.

His eyes, I felt, though I could not look up to meet them, were resting upon me with something of reproach.

"You crush me with a burthen of obligations that never can be shaken off—never, never repaid," I groaned.

A smothered sob escaped me, and I covered my face with my hands.

"Come, Mrs. Darkwood," I heard Leigh saying more cheerily—"you must return to the house. If you were to catch cold out here, the Viscountess, I know, would never forgive me. Let us be moving. Will you take my arm?"

"No, thank you," I murmured. "It is quite light. I can see very well."

"That was not my meaning. I thought you—not yet being over-strong—were in all likelihood feeling tired," he rejoined very gravely.

"Oh, no!"—speaking as indifferently as I could; and I drew my cloak more closely around me. "Yes, let us be going; it is late," added I.

Ah me! Tired? Was I not tired both in body and in soul—unspeakably weary and leaden-hearted?

Happy Isla—you, dear—at rest there beneath that dim and dewy turf!

We left the churchyard and closed the little gate, Mr. Eversleigh, his hands behind him, walking slowly in the grass by my side.

"By-the-bye," he observed, "I saw some one in town the other day who inquired most kindly after your welfare, Mrs. Darkwood. Can you guess who it was?"

"No," I said wonderingly—"who was it?"

It could not be Mr. Binkworthy, I had instantly decided, and at the moment I could think of no other likely person.

Nevertheless I added quickly, "Was it Mr. Binkworthy?"

"Mr. Binkworthy?" echoed Leigh, for a few seconds in doubt.

"Yes; Mr. Binkworthy—the manager of the Levity," I said, with a flash of rather poor and uneasy defiance. "Of course you know that I have sung for a living at his variety theatre?"

"Yes," he answered quietly, "I know that; but for the minute I had forgotten it. No, it was not Mr. Binkworthy; it was your old friend Mr. Jones—that self-same old Mr. Jones who—who——"

"You mean the old Mr. Jones who lodged in Bentham Street?" I interrupted eagerly.

"Yes, it was he," said Leigh.

"Ah, he was indeed a good and strangely kind old man!" I sighed, thinking of Isla and her brief pathetic past. "Always so—so good—so very good to my feeling!"

"That I can readily understand. For he had once—long ago, in his better and brighter days—little children of his own. They are dead now—all dead and gone; and he is left in the world poor and alone—utterly alone," said Leigh.

"It is singular that you should know him," mused I aloud.

"I know him very well—in fact, I have known him very well for many years. At the present time he is acting as clerk to a barrister-friend of mine," said Mr. Eversleigh somewhat hastily. "I always try to take care that in some way or other he is decently provided for. Poor lonely old fellow—I believe he would do anything for me!"

For some minutes we walked on in silence, I pondering many a circumstance—many a circumstance which perplexed and troubled me in no small degree—that belonged to the dead gray past. I said abruptly—

"Mr. Eversleigh, how did you first learn that I was engaged to sing at the theatre? And how did you first discover that I was living in out-of-the-way Bentham Street? Will you tell me?"

"Not to-night," he answered, in the same halting yet hurried manner; "at some other time perhaps—not to-night."

"Why not to-night?" I persisted, somehow speaking more coldly by far than I wished to speak.

"I can hardly explain. For one thing, the story is too long, Mrs. Darkwood; and—and here we are, you see, close to the house. I shall not be surprised if we find Lady Tracy looking out for us. She is certain to be anxious about you, and will, as I said, naturally blame me if anything happens to——"

I checked him proudly.

"Perhaps," I said, "you went one night to the theatre, recognised me in 'Madame Fleurette,' were amazed to find me earning a livelihood amid such odd surroundings, and out of curiosity you doubtless watched me—followed me home to Bentham Street——"

"You are wrong," Leigh in his turn interrupted almost sternly. "I frankly admit—why indeed should I deny it?—that I did go many a time to the theatre to hear you sing—in fact, I went whenever I could; for you yourself well know, Mrs. Darkwood, how thoroughly I enjoy good music, particularly the music of a beautiful and cultivated voice like yours; but never once did I follow you, as you so harshly and unkindly put it, to the lodgings which at the time were your home. I trust you will believe what I say."

"Well, I never recognized you amongst a Levity audience, never! Perhaps it was as well for me that I did not," I exclaimed, in a somewhat hysterical key. "I suppose you hid yourself, Mr. Eversleigh, in one of those odious little narrow boxes with the tawdry hangings? They always made me nervous—I hated them! One could never tell for certain whether they were empty or occupied," I added petulantly.

"Hid myself? Well, yes, if you like to put it so," he remarked gently. "I seldom failed to come on those evenings when you sang 'Kathleen Mavourneen' and 'The Better Land.'"

"And you will not tell me how you came to know that I had consented to sing for Mr. Binkworthy?" I questioned impatiently.

He seemed to be pondering something before he replied.

"Yes, I will tell you that," he said at last, in a more friendly tone. "Old Mr. Jones, in the first instance, was my informant."

"Old Mr. Jones again! Who—what," I cried, in strong irritation, "was that shy and shadowy old man? The thought of him worries me: there is something behind it all, something I do not understand. Why will you not be more open, more explicit with me, Mr. Eversleigh?" I demanded. "Old Mr. Jones, I imagine, likewise informed you that I lived in Bentham Street?"

"No."

A very sudden thought, a fearful remembrance, like lightning struck across my mind.

My hands involuntarily locked themselves together, my fingers working convulsively meanwhile.

"Oh, Mr. Eversleigh," I said with difficulty, my voice little better than a wild whisper, "I should have mentioned it before! Forgive me, forgive me, I am ungrateful, stop one moment!" I broke off, in speech more nervous and disjointed than ever. "Yonder, see, is an open window; it has just been thrown up; Lady Tracy herself stands there beckoning to us. One moment, stop!"

He halted directly within the shadow of a clump of flowering lilacs; their faint subtle fragrance upon the dewy night-air was inexpressibly sweet; often the scent of those lilacs comes back to me in my happiest dreams.

He grasped my trembling hands within his own warm strong ones, and firmly held them thus.

"Mrs. Darkwood, my dear friend," said he very kindly, "you must be calmer. This excitement cannot be good for you: you will make yourself ill——"

"Hush! I must and will speak. On that fearful night in Bentham Street you arrived not one moment too soon—ah, I recollect, I recollect!—but in time nevertheless to save me from the perpetration—the—the—consequences of a deed so dreadful, so unnatural, that——"

A violent shudder shook me from head to foot. For a minute or so I could not continue.

"Why speak of it?" Leigh was saying, really distressed. "It is past—over—let it rest and be forgotten. Why should it not be so? It is the better way."

"No, no! But for you my hands would be red with blood—with the blood of Daryl Darkwood—my own husband! Ah, too horrible! But for you I should be a murderess—branded like Cain—yet Heaven knows I did not mean it; I could not help it! I was not myself then; I was mad with grief on that cruel night, and my brain had already given way. Thank you, Mr. Eversleigh, thank you, thank you from the very depth of my heart for what you did for me in that terrible hour of need. Yes, I will thank you, I will; but after this night never to living soul will I speak of it again! I am utterly in ignorance as to how you contrived to come to me so opportunely. It may have been pure chance, more likely it was the mercy and interposition of Heaven. Perhaps that shy and strange old man summoned you at a time when your presence was so sorely required? I know not; I cannot tell. And, though guessing is vain, I do know this, that I am grateful to you," I cried passionately, "that my gratitude is a living gratitude, it will never die! Only when the breath leaves my body, when earthly things grow dim for me, shall I cease to remember all that you have done for me—for my sake! To remember your nobility, your goodness, until death—that is easy. But in any wise to repay you so long as I am alive—ah, that is impossible!"

"Do not—do not put it so! Oh, if you could only understand!" he was beginning almost as impulsively and as passionately as I myself had spoken. But he appeared to check himself with an effort, and said soothingly, if somewhat incoherently, "Yes, Mrs. Darkwood, it was old Mr. Jones; there is no reason why you should not know it. Often through him I have heard what you were doing; how you and—and the child were getting along in the new life. Being aware, you see, that I was a friend of yours, and convinced that on that winter night you were in very real need of a true friend's help and counsel, he journeyed in haste to my chambers to inform me of your dire necessity. Unluckily, when he arrived in the Temple, he learnt that I was out dining, it so chanced, at a house in a distant suburb. But, determined to find me, the plucky old man! and bring me to you if it were possible, he hailed a cab, the best he could secure, and—and managed, after considerable delay, to discover whither I had gone. Thank Heaven," said Leigh Eversleigh hurriedly, raising his face, which in the bright moonlight looked singularly pale and earnest, to the silent stars—"I was not too late!"

"Yes; for that I shall thank Heaven until my dying day!" I cried, with another hysterical catch in my voice. "Mr. Eversleigh, if Lady Tracy were not watching us from that window in the drawing-room, I would kneel here upon the ground at your feet—yes, I would, I would!—and kiss your hands, and thank you humbly thus for——"

"Mrs. Darkwood," he broke in very hoarsely, "you must not—indeed you must not. I cannot bear it—to hear you. You pain me unspeakably—you are too——"

But at that instant Aurora, having lost all patience, was advancing towards us swiftly over the silvery lawn, a fleecy white wrap flung carelessly about her head and shoulders. Indeed she picked up her long train, ran, and, joining us without ceremony, interrupted Mr. Eversleigh.

"Upon my word," cried the Viscountess, rather out of breath, "you ought to know better—both of you! How on earth can you be so unwise—and not yet May, too? Why, the ground is soaking; these dewy spring nights are abominably treacherous. Flower, my dear, you want to catch your death, I should imagine; and really I had almost said that you deserve to do so. Well," exclaimed Aurora impatiently, perceiving that we had neither of us a word of any kind ready just then, "what does Flower say to your proposition, Mr. Eversleigh? If she is so bent upon carrying out this absurd nursing whim of hers, I should imagine that the idea would meet with her warmest approbation. It is just the very thing!"

"We have not discussed the matter yet," replied Leigh, trying to answer the Viscountess in his natural, pleasant manner. "I think now, Lady Tracy, that it must wait until to-morrow. I am sure Mrs. Darkwood is much too fatigued to listen to me to-night."

"Good gracious," cried Aurora, in her brightest and bluntest fashion, "not discussed the matter yet! Why, what in the world, then, have you been talking about all this long while? Loftus, who is dying for a cigar and a chat with you, Mr. Eversleigh, would have it that you and Mrs. Darkwood had lost your way, perhaps strayed into the watercress brook, and he wanted to come and look for you himself."

I waited to hear no more.

Like a ghost I stole away from them, and glided into the house—across the hall—up the stairs; and, as I had done on returning from our drive in the afternoon, I gained my own rooms and there locked myself in.

What a puzzle and a maze was life! thought I heavily. Was it actually worth living, after all?

For some people, I told myself emphatically, "No!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

STRANGE HIDING PLACES.—A lame man was convicted of passing base coin. When apprehended, it was found he had a receptacle in his wooden leg, in which a considerable stock of the bad money was cunningly secreted. We have sometimes seen a considerable pile of coins unearthed from the voluminous folds of a ragged coat, trousers or vest.

Bank-notes, for obvious reasons, are capable of being stowed away in little space; and thieves often hide them in the cracked joints of a dilapidated old table, chair or bed. Underneath a picture, or between the portrait and the back, appears to be a favorite place of concealment.

Articles are often "planked" in the chimney behind the grate; and a watch has even been tossed into a glowing coal-fire, when pursuit was close, although in at least one instance the latter device was unavailing.

Two detectives were once searching the house of a well-known thief for some stolen jewelry. The scent was keen, and the examination searching. High and low they rummaged, but without success. From the air of the thief the officers were satisfied the stolen property was concealed in or about the room.

One of them noticed that the interest of the suspected man grew more intense as they approached the window. Taking this as his clue, the officer narrowly examined the shutters, and even tore off the strips that kept in the window-sashes; but without result. Suddenly a thought struck him, and lifting the lower sash he scanned the outside of the wall closely.

About three or four feet below the window-sill he saw a stone in the wall that appeared to be loose. Calling his comrade to hold him by the legs, he reached down, pulled out a small square stone, thrust in his hand, and found a nice little "hide," containing not only the articles he was in search of, but also other stolen property sufficient to connect the thief with several "jobs," and to procure him a long term of quiet contemplation.

A smart female thief once very nearly outwitted an officer by wrapping a crumpled and dirty five-dollar note round a candle, and stuffing it into a candlestick, which she then obligingly handed to him. He searched a considerable time before discovering that he had the object of his search in his hand.

Another detective, after in vain searching a house for some trussed poultry that had been stolen, cast one parting glance around, when his eye chanced to alight on a cradle in which a woman was vainly trying to hush a squalling baby. A thought struck him. He asked her to lift the child. The woman made some excuse, but the officer insisted, and was immediately rewarded by finding a couple of the stolen fowls.

THE QUEEN-BEE.—"All her wants in the way of nourishment are supplied by her subjects. She mates once in her life, when she is a few days old, with a single drone, and on the wing. That is the only occasion of her leaving the hive, except when she leads forth a swarm.

Her grand function is to lay eggs, and every part of her structure and every power she has is more or less related to this all-important duty. She is, as we have implied, freed from every office. The hatching, the tending, the rearing, the instruction of her progeny, are entirely taken out of her hands, and it is doubtful whether she has any affection for her children.

She is constantly attended by a retinue of ten or twelve 'maids of honor,' who all keep their heads turned towards her, clear the way for her, prevent all crowding round her, and supply her with the most nutritious food, previously half-digested by themselves. They caress her with their antennæ, and seem to find a real joy in mere proximity to their monarch.

Should she, by more rapid movements than usual, outstrip her retiring attendants, the bees with whom she thus unexpectedly comes in contact appear excited and alarmed and move hastily from her path.

So long as she remains sound and well in the hive, all the varied works go on peacefully and incessantly. Should she die or be removed, immediate consternation is manifested. Her subjects rush about in excitement and distress. They buzz around the neighborhood of the hive, but all active and productive work ceases. They know that unless the disastrous loss can be repaired, their community must perish for lack of new progeny, and when despair seizes them, they seem to act upon the motto, 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.'"

THE MOON.—To see a new moon for the first time on the right hand, or directly before you, betokens the utmost good fortune that month; as to have her on your left, or behind you, foreshadows the worst; as also, they say, to be without gold in your pocket at that time is of very bad consequence. The mistake in substituting gold for silver here is easily explained. As among the Romans "æs" meant both copper and money; and among the French "argent" means both silver and money in general; so in England gold is the common expression for coin of any substance. Other superstitions besides those above noticed are found in different parts of our enlightened land. One author says, "I once saw an aged matron turn her apron to the new moon to insure good luck for the ensuing month." And another mentions a prayer customary among some persons:

"I see the moon, and the moon sees me,
God bless the moon, and God bless me."

OLD FLOWERS.

BY EMILY CARRINGTON.

Wither'd flowers, that once were beautiful,
Gather'd in the sunshine long ago,
All your perfume gone, your colors dull,
Little have ye now of grace to show;
Yet ye mind us of the pleasant time,
When we pluck'd you in your sweetest prime!

Far amid the deep wood's shade abiding,
By the ripple of the laughing stream,
On the bank or in the hedgerow hiding,
Was it wrong to break your happy dream?
No—for though your beauty did not last,
Ye are still sweet memories of the past!

Ye are emblems of those dear affections
Scatter'd all along life's weary way,
Soon to be to us but recollections
Of a happiness that pass'd away.
Grateful in our heart of hearts, we prove
All the memory of their loveliness!

Was It a Mistake?

BY CURTIS YORKE.

CHAPTER I.

ONE chilly afternoon in February, a very pretty, very determined-looking young woman was standing, dressed for walking, before one of the artistically draped mirrors which adorned a certain cosy little drawing-room in South Kensington.

She was regarding the very seductive vision which was reflected in the aforesaid mirror with large, serious, seemingly unappreciative eyes.

They were lovely eyes, by the way, dark, soft and expressive.

Her features were small, and sharply cut; her figure was all a woman's ought to be; her tout ensemble was bewitching enough to satisfy the most captious critic of charms feminine.

The only other occupant of the room was an elderly lady who sat in an easy-chair near the fire.

She was a real elderly lady, with a real cap and real gray hair.

Usually she wore a real smile too, but it was replaced on this occasion by a distinctly unreal frown.

"You make me feel almost angry, Nina," this lady was saying, with would-be severity, "and your Aunt Lavinia is very much disappointed. You have refused a truly estimable man, a most worthy man, and in a splendid position as far as means go—for no reason whatever, except——"

"Except that I hate him," rejoined the young person addressed as Nina, with vicious emphasis, putting up one daintily gloved hand to adjust the absurd little spotted veil which covered half of her charming face. "I would rather be thrown from the top of St. Paul's, or—or be boiled alive than marry Mr Peter Harding! Ugh! I can scarcely bear even to dance with him. I would as soon marry a toad! So now, Aunt Jane! If you are tired of me," hotly, "why I——"

"Tut, tut! my dear," said Aunt Jane, "don't be silly. But this is the fourth good match you have refused lately, to my certain knowledge," she continued regretfully; "and you know, Nina, you are twenty-five——"

"Twenty-four and a half, dear," gently corrected her niece.

"Well, it's all the same; and your Aunt Lavinia says——"

"That she had fourteen offers before she was sixteen!" interrupted Nina glibly. "One from a marquis, two from millionaires, seven from baronets, and four from large landed proprietors. I know the list by heart! That she was married before she was seventeen, and was a grandmother at—was it twenty-eight or thirty-eight, auntie?" she concluded with an air of innocent inquiry.

But Aunt Jane did not laugh. She thought it almost treason to laugh at "Aunt Lavinia," who was her only sister, long since widowed, and who ruled the whole household with a rod of iron—except one member, and that one refractory member was Miss Nina Ferrers, who, being an orphan, had lived with these two aunts, her only relatives in England, since she left school.

She disputed Aunt Lavinia's authority vigorously and continuously, and listened with silent scorn to that lady's long-drawn-out tales of the havoc she had made among susceptible male hearts in days gone by.

"Twenty-four!" said Nina, turning away from the mirror, and rolling up her eyes in mock dismay, "and still Nina Ferrers! Terrible! And nearly all my contemporaries have deserted me to join the ranks of the glorious British matrons. And yet—are they any happier than I? Edith Mowbray, for instance; she has diamonds ad libitum, the handsomest horses in London—or out of it, carte blanche at Worth's and Elise's, and, for anything I know, at Hunt and Roskell's as well. How happy she must be! Her husband is a great bloated beast, of course, with two ideas—his dinner and his wine-cellar, especially the latter. But what of that? A mere detail! Nellie Allingham, too, she fell in love with and married the handsomest man it has ever been my lot to behold.

"She adores him still; and he—well, his affaires du cœur are as numerous as ever, perhaps rather more so. Poor Nellie! Annie Dering, too; she ought to glide through life on velvet. She is now Lady Cardonnel; her settlements were princely, she is as beautiful as a dream, she has society at her feet, and her entertainments are more sought after than any in town. Of course she is happy. True, they say his lordship ill-uses her brutally in private. They also say she hates him like poison. I know she looks like the ghost of the girl she used to be. But," with a shrug, "what will you? You can't have everything. Poor pretty Mabel, too, who married an old horror with both feet in the grave, and broke her lover's heart——

"But I will not particularize further. On looking round the circle of our married acquaintance, I do not think wedded bliss is—to speak paradoxically—conducive to happiness. As a matter of fact, I heartily admire Aunt Lavinia's bete noire, Violet Carlin, who ran away from her fat old stockbroker of a bridegroom on her wedding morning, and took wing for the East to nurse our glorious heroes in the Soudan."

"Violet Carlin is going to be married to Captain King, of the Artillery," said Aunt Jane quietly. "Mrs. Laurie told me to-day. I forgot to tell you."

"What, Felix King? I know him. He'll break her heart before six months are over their heads. I thought Violet had more sense. Well, I must go, or it will be dark before I get back."

"Now, my dear," said Aunt Jane, "let me entreat you not to make yourself late. It is not safe to be out after dusk. Your Aunt Lavinia says——"

"That villains are lurking at every street corner," said Nina saucily, "for the express purpose of waylaying unprotected females in general and Nina Ferrers in particular. As if a woman of my age could not take care of herself! No lady is ever insulted now-a-days, so long as she behaves and looks like a lady. Times are changed, darling, since you and Aunt Lavinia were young," she concluded, with an impulsive hug. "Is there anything I can do for you?" she added.

"No, unless you should be in the Strand, and have time to call for your Aunt Lavinia's watch."

Nina's shopping occupied more time than she had calculated upon, and when she left the jeweler's shop mentioned by Aunt Jane—where she had to wait some little time—it was almost dark, and the lamps were already lighted.

"How provoking!" she thought. "I wanted to go to see that engraving the Romers were talking of. I might run along yet. I will; and I can take a hansom from there."

No sooner decided that acted upon, and in a few minutes she had reached the print-seller's ever-attractive windows.

The engraving she sought was not in the windows looking to the Strand; so she turned down Savoy Street, where she became so absorbed, first by the picture she had come to see, and then by several others, that "Big Ben's" deep announcement that it was six o'clock caused her some dismay.

As the last stroke boomed through the air, a hansom drove up to the kerb behind her with a noisy rattle, the doors were flung back violently, even for the doors of a hansom, and the next moment Nina felt a grasp on her arm, and heard a man's voice say in shaking tones:

"Oh, my darling at last!"

With a terrified exclamation she turned quickly, and found herself gazing into the agitated face of a tall, aristocratic-looking man, a total stranger to her.

For a moment she stood actually motionless with fright, then wrenched her arm quickly away and darted swiftly down the street.

This was foolish, for it was now quite dark, and Savoy Street is not a busy thoroughfare.

He overtook her in a second, and again his hand grasped her arm.

"What do you mean, sir?" she exclaimed very haughtily. "Let me go instantly!"

"Let you go!" he replied in rapid, passionate tones. "Never again — never again."

Then more quietly:

"Adela, be reasonable. My wife, come home; and I will forgive everything, forget everything!"

"You are most insolent, sir," she returned indignantly. "Let me go at once, or I shall call a policeman."

(Why, oh why, she thought, had she disregarded Aunt Jane's injunctions?)

She made a very quick rapid movement, but her captor foresaw it, and held her fast.

"No, no, by Heaven," he said in a fierce undertone, "you shall not escape me again."

And so saying, before she could even guess what he was about to do, he had hurried her towards the waiting hansom, lifted her in, and, giving some quick, sharp direction to the driver, took his seat beside her, and closed the doors.

"Police! help! police!" she almost screamed, recovering from her momentary stupefaction, as the horse moved forward. "Police!" she shrieked again, with a wild gasp of hope, as one of the protectors of the "liege" sauntered up the street. He stopped and turned.

"Ah, let me out," she cried. "Quick! help! help!"

One or two passers-by turned, glanced at the group carelessly, then went on their way.

The policeman, who with a gesture had stopped the cabman, advanced quite hastily.

"What is this, sir?" he said in quick authoritative tones, laying his hand on the door.

"This lady is my wife," said Nina's companion haughtily. "You will oblige me by telling the man to drive on."

"It is not true," shrieked Nina: "I never saw him before. Let me out; let me out!"

"You see? She has been ill," went on the stranger rapidly.

"I see, sir," said the agent of the law, with a sudden access of civility, looking curiously at the struggling girl, and at the same time letting his fingers close on a couple of gold coins. "All right, cabby."

The horse started forward, and Nina was borne very swiftly away through the darkness.

She screamed and struggled, and strove to push open the doors, even to climb over them.

Her companion put his arm round her with an air of proprietorship inexpressibly gentle, but inexpressibly determined too, and said almost sternly:

"All this is useless, Adela. You are only pairing both yourself and me by this pretence of not knowing me—your own husband."

"Oh, this is insufferable," she exclaimed passionately. "My name is not Adela. I am not married. You know I never saw you before. It is cowardly, horrible of you! Oh, what shall I do? what shall I do!"

And throwing herself back in the corner, she burst into wild, hysterical sobs.

Her companion had partly withdrawn his arm, only leaving it in such a position as would enable him to prevent her escaping.

"Worse than ever!" she heard him utter under his breath.

Then, after a pause, he said indistinctly:

"Is the thought of coming back to me so horrible to you? Are you so hard, so changed, still?"

But Nina took no notice, only sobbed more wildly.

"You know you have been ill, darling," he went on in soothing tones, as though speaking to a sick child. "You are not your own loving self. Everything will be clear to you by-and-by. Ah, my wife, can you not trust yourself to me?"

He was so evidently in earnest, so much under the influence of some almost uncontrollable though strongly suppressed emotion, that Nina looked at him for a moment in incredulous amazement.

They were passing by some gaily lighted building, and she saw that his face was white and haggard, his lips under his heavy moustache were quivering painfully; he had the look of a man to whom sleep had long been a stranger.

"I will forget everything, Adela," he went on in a low shaking tone. "The past months shall be as though they had never been. Ah, do not look at me with that horror in your eyes! My wife, have pity; you are breaking my heart!"

Nina was so struck by the passionate earnestness of his manner, by the unmistakable anguish that vibrated in his deep voice, that she checked her sobs and sat up.

A new fear took possession of her, and thrilled her very soul.

This man was mad! there could be no doubt of it; and she was entirely in his power! For a second or two she sat almost paralyzed.

Then even in her sick terror she became suddenly conscious that she must not show him she was afraid of him; so she said as quietly as she could, though her heart was beating like a steam-hammer:

"I think you mistake me for someone else. I——"

"Dear," he replied with anxious tenderness, "you know, during your illness you forgot many things. By-the-by, when you are quite strong again, you will understand how terribly your cold words, your averted looks wound me; how——"

His voice faltered; he stopped, and Nina felt that the arm which still half encircled her waist was trembling violently.

They were crossing Oxford Street, she noted despairingly.

In an incredibly short time they would be at St. Pancras, whither she had a confused recollection of hearing him direct the cabman.

Where was he going to take her? With the desperation of despair, she rapidly evolved a plan.

She would no longer deny that she was his wife, lest he should break into frenzy, and become unmanageable, but humor him until they reached the station.

Then surely she would find some one to help her, some means of escape.

So rallying all her powers of dissimulation, she looked up at him, and said gently and wonderingly:

"Ah, I have been ill, then? I am better now. But, I seem confused. I do not remember——"

"Ah, my darling," he returned eagerly, "I hoped, I knew, when I saw your tears, bitter as they were to me, that the clouds that have separated us so long were rolling away from your mind. And now tell me," he went on, evidently controlling his voice with difficulty, "where have you been all these weary days and nights? Had you no money? Had you—Heavens! do you know how the thought has maddened me? how——"

"I will tell you everything afterwards," she interrupted him hurriedly, noticing the growing excitement in his tone. "Only forgive me. You know I was ill, and—and——"

"Yes, yes, I will forgive everthing; I swear it. But ah! little one, why did you harbor such cruel thoughts of me, say such cruel words? Was it that you were jealous? Forgive me, dear, but your words before—before your illness—they seemed to imply——"

"Yes, yes," she answered hastily, "that was it. I was jealous."

"My darling," venturing to hold her a little closer, "of whom? Not of Alice, surely?"

"Yes, of Alice," she muttered, trusting she might be forgiven the awful lies she was uttering.

"Oh, Adela!" he went on in a voice which shook, in spite of his apparent efforts to keep it calm and steady, "how could you?"

Nina shivered involuntarily, and felt herself a criminal of the deepest dye.

"My wife," he continued, with an inexpressible softening of the voice, "do not start away from me. I will ask you no more questions. No one shall. It shall be as though you had never been away. You will find everything as you left it, except that Alice has gone. And we will forget, my Adela, that this trouble has ever come between us."

In spite of all her terror and bewilderment, Nina felt strangely touched, and a feeling of deep pity took the place of anger in her heart.

"You will not leave me again, my child?" he said, still with that strong restraint in his tone.

"No—oh, no," Nina hastened to reply, with a duplicity of which an hour ago she would not have deemed herself capable.

For uncompromising truthfulness was one of Miss Ferrer's idiosyncrasies in general.

But, in dealing with a real lunatic, the sternest moralist slackens the chain a little.

"Promise me," he whispered. "Say, 'Geoffrey, I promise.'"

"Geoffrey, I—I promise," she slowly murmured.

"Swear it," he continued hoarsely.

Nina had not contemplated this, but a moment's thought supplied a Jesuitical answer.

"I swear," she said in trembling tones, "that I will never leave my dear husband again."

"Ah, my darling," he breathed, with a sudden tightening of his arm round her waist.

(Heavens! she thought in terror, was he going to kiss her?)

"On one condition," she said calmly, but with a wildly beating heart.

"Yes, darling, anything."

But the next moment he bent his head to hers, his moustache brushed her cheek, his lips touched hers.

"Oh, don't!" she exclaimed in an agony of shame and terror, putting up her hands to her face.

"Your condition—what is it?" he said unsteadily.

"That you—that you take away your arm."

(His arm was instantly removed.)

"And that you do not—do not kiss me again until we get home."

"Is my touch so hateful to you—still?" he said bitterly.

"No, no," Nina hastened to say. "But I am nervous, and——"

"True," he interruped her, "it shall be as you wish."

And throwing himself back in his seat, he covered his eyes with his hand.

"Oh, child," he muttered, "if you knew how I have suffered—if you knew!"

There was a short silence. They were driving through Gordon Square. A few minutes more and they would be at the station.

She felt curiously calm now, and self-reliant. As they passed under a bright lamp, she stole a look at her companion's face.

His hand still covered his eyes; he was gnawing his under-lip fiercely. He looked so ill, so miserable, that Nina, as before, felt a strange compassion mingling with her fear of this dangerously good-looking lunatic.

Poor fellow! what a pity it seemed! She wondered what had deprived him of reason.

Perhaps his wife was dead, or had left him, and his diseased brain conjured up her likeness in every woman he met. Geoffrey—his name was.

Geoffrey what? His manner, voice, bearing, all proclaimed him in every sense of the word a gentleman.

Here she became aware that the subject of her thoughts had moved slightly, and was regarding her steadily with a pair of very expressive dark eyes, full of a half-wistful tenderness, and certainly looking sane enough just now.

She had been gazed at scores of times, by scores of lovers' eyes with less of sanity in them.

But, she remembered shuddering, the worst of madmen were cunning enough at times to look perfectly sensible. Perhaps he had murdered this poor Adela, this wife of his, whom he seemed to have loved so passionately.

Ah, what a terrible lottery is marriage! she reflected. She turned her head away, for his eyes seemed to thrill her as no other eyes had ever done.

He was not too mad, evidently, to keep his promises; for he neither attempted to put his arm round her again nor to kiss her, for which she was intensely thankful.

"I can scarcely believe that I have found you again," he said, taking her hand in his, and speaking with an odd catch in his voice; "that all the agony, the uncertainty, is over. It seems as though it must be a dream."

Poor Nina devoutly wished it had been a dream.

"Do you know I intended leaving England to-morrow?" he went on, holding her hand very tightly.

"Ah, if you had only left it to-day!" thought Miss Ferrers.

But she only murmured, "Yes?"

They were driving into the station now.

"Adela," went on the unhappy Geoffrey, "you will try to love me again?"

"Yes, oh, yes," replied Nina, with ready mendacity.

The hansom stopped with a jerk, and the girl's heart beat as her companion lifted her out.

Should she try to get away now? she thought, as he turned to pay the cabman. No; he was watching her furtively and anxiously.

Should she implore assistance from some benevolent stranger? No, he would simply claim her as his wife in that calm, lordly way as before, and no one would believe her.

She must wait. So she walked quietly by his side until they emerged on to the platform.

Her companion, who certainly managed to look sane enough at times, looked at his watch.

"We do not start for ten minutes," he said, "but we had better secure an empty compartment."

"Where are you going to take me?" she faltered.

"Home," he answered, looking at her searchingly; "where—where should I take you?"

Then quickly:

"Unless—would you rather remain in town to-night?"

"No, oh, no."

Nina's heart sank as they stopped before an empty car, and the obsequiously following porter flung open the door.

"No luggage," said Geoffrey curtly, waving him aside.

Then to Nina, hurriedly and anxiously.

"My darling, how pale you look, and how you are trembling! Let me bring you a glass of sherry, or a cup of tea, or something?"

"Yes, please, a cup of tea," gasped Nina, as she took her seat, her heart leaping to her mouth.

But he lingered.

"You need not be alarmed—er—Geoffrey," said Nina, smiling spasmodically and deceitfully into his anxious face. "You are afraid that I am going to run away from you, are you not?"

A dark flush rose to his brow, then receded again.

"Have I not reason to be afraid?" he said in a low voice.

"And have I not promised?" returned Nina, half-hysterically. "Can you not trust me?"

"Yes, my dearest," he replied. Then a little wistfully, "You would not deceive me?"

"Ah, Geoffrey!" in very reproachful tones.

"Forgive me," he said hastily, "I know you would not. Your word is quite sufficient."

Nina's heart smote her, but she only said:

"I hope so."

He hesitated a moment; then he went away. As Nina watched him along the platform she could not help noticing, even in her feverish impatience, what a fine-looking man he was; and certainly, mad or not, he would make a most attentive husband.

In a few seconds she saw him disappear into the refreshment-room, and the next instant she had jumped out of the car, and was speeding swiftly along the platform, with limbs that trembled so that she could scarcely drag them along, in spite of her agony of terror.

More than once she looked fearfully over her shoulder; but the tall form of her dreaded captor was nowhere to be seen as yet.

She crossed the entrance hall, and reached the line of waiting cabs. Then she looked back once more. No, he was not in sight.

"Cab, miss?" said the driver of the nearest hansom.

"Yes. Layton Gardens, South Kensington," she panted, her heart beating almost to suffocation. "Drive fast!" she went on hurriedly, as she scrambled into the vehicle, "as fast as you can."

"All right, miss."

The man whipped up his horse, and the station was soon left far behind. The horse went well, but he seemed to Nina the slowest of his kind; every slight block, every momentary stoppage, was a keen agony to the trembling girl.

Her strained ears and eyes seemed to conjure up pursuit in every shout, in every passing vehicle; her dreaded captor's voice seemed to sound in her ears, the haunting penetrating gaze of his eyes to meet her on every side.

At last, with an inexpressible sense of relief, she saw that the hansom had turned into the Brompton Road.

She breathed more freely; but not until she had reached Layton Gardens, and knocked wildly at her aunt's door, did she feel any degree of security.

She rushed past the astonished page, almost fell upstairs, then, her room gained, she locked the door, as though dreading she might not be safe even there, and burst into a storm of tears and sobs.

* * * * * *

"Well, Nina, you little will-o'-the-wisp, so I have really got you at last. I had begun to think that your promise, like lovers' vows and pie-crust, were only made to be broken."

The speaker was Mrs. George Chillingly, dark-eyed, vivacious, and on the sunny side of thirty.

Her companion was Nina Ferrers. They were seated in the cosy inner drawing-room at Chillingly, in affectionate proximity to a roaring fire. The time of year was January; the time of day was five o'clock p.m.

Although nearly two years had elapsed since Nina's extraordinary adventure, she had kept the experience of that February night a profound secret.

Not even to Aunt Jane had she confided her "narrow escape."

For months afterwards she had scarcely dared to go out alone, so great was her terror of again meeting and being captured by the unhappy man who suffered from so strange a delusion.

But I am obliged to confess that she thought of him much more frequently than Aunt Jane would have approved, or indeed than she entirely approved herself.

And, to Aunt Lavinia's indignation, she had sent five more suitors, all eligible, disconsolate a way, and announced her fixed and unalterable intention of living and dying a spinster.

She had arrived at Chillingly only an hour ago, on a month's visit to her old friend and schoolfellow, Janet Foster, now Mrs. Chillingly.

"I thought we were never going to see you again," said the latter lady, stirring the fire vigorously. "And now that you have come, I want you to make yourself specially charming—even more charming than usual, I mean."

"Why?" smiled Nina, idly waving an elaborate fire-screen to and fro. "Have you any one particular staying here?"

"Only Colonel Lorimer just now. You have met him often enough. He and George are out murdering innocent little birds. I expect them in every moment. But it is not for either of them that you are to do the seductive, my dear. We expect a certain Mr. Beresford to-night, a new chum of George's. They met last autumn somewhere in Scotland, and George took a great fancy to him. I can't say he is exactly the kind of man I like. He came for a few days in November, and I felt as if I were at a funeral the whole time. He is, well very peculiar, very reserved, and melancholy, and difficile generally. So I want you to take him in hand."

"Thanks, very much," yawned Nina, "you are very kind; but I don't think I care about peculiar, reserved, melancholy, difficile men. I'm getting too old to exert myself by drawing them out. I prefer them ordinary, confidential, gay, and easy."

"Oh no, you don't. You always can charm into geniality those taciturn beings who are sphinxes to everybody else. Besides you must, because he is going to stay for weeks, and I could do nothing with him. George and Colonel Lorimer will spend the evenings in tearing old Gladstone to pieces, and discussing the Irish question until they are black in the face, as usual, and Mr. Beresford will sit silent, with a face expressive of utter indifference as to whether England is governed by a hypocrite, or a fool, or a mountebank, or not governed at all; so you must burst like a revelation upon this iceberg, and, thaw him! Besides, he has a splendid estate down in Staffordshire—Cardew, it it is called, and is enormously wealthy. Ah, here comes Brookes with tea. Bring the table to the fire, Brookes. You don't take sugar, Nina? No, I thought not."

"Is this Mr. Beresford young, then? Is he handsome? or is he neither?" inquired Nina languidly, when the man had left the room.

"Oh, he is considerably over thirty, I should say. As to looks, he has rather a nice face, if he would only look a little less as it he wished he and everybody else were dead. He has the most extraordinary eyes, by the way; mesmeric eyes. But after all, poor fellow, it is no wonder he looks gloomy; his is a most painful story."

"What kind of story?" said Nina, taking a rapid and exhaustive view of the cake-basket as she spoke. "A decent story, I trust?"

"Oh yes, quite; at least I believe so. I only know the mere outline. George told me (in confidence, of course), and you know the scrappy way men always dole out anything one particularly wants to know. But, good gracious, I must go and see if Macpherson has sent in enough flowers; he is the stingiest old creature. I had no idea it was so late. Now be sure you look your loveliest to-night, Nina. Oh yes, I know you have taken vows of celibacy. But I don't want you to marry the man—you couldn't if you tried; I only want you to entertain him, and waken him up a bit."

And Mrs. Chillingly rustled away.

Nina did look very lovely as she stepped softly across the hall about an hour before dinner.

She wore a quaintly made gown of some curious gray shade, a color which would have been trying, probably, to most women, but which was eminently becoming to her.

Her thick brown hair was piled loosely on the top of her pretty head; her cheeks were clearly, softly pink; her eyes dangerously dark and sweet.

She crossed the long drawing-room, which was empty, and parted the heavy curtains which divided it from the inner room. Then she paused, one arm slightly raised, her head bent a little forward.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A DEACON of Seymour, Ind., has been expelled from the church for declaring his belief that the world is one million years old, and that it is likely to stand for another million years before the judgment day comes.

THE GAME OF TENNIS.

LIKE many another modern institution, it is in name a re-appearance, though in a somewhat different form, of an ancient and well-known one. Tennis is really hand-ball played with rackets instead of the hand.

It was as favorite a game in France and England at the time of the Plantagenets as it is now, at least among those who had leisure for it.

A first allusion to it is found in the reign of Edward III., when an ancestor of the celebrated Hampden was playing tennis with the Black Prince.

They quarreled, and Hampden struck the Black Prince a blow with his racket. The heavy penalty he incurred, namely, the confiscation of three manors, is commemorated in an old rhyme:

"Tring, Wing, and Ivanhoe,
For striking of a blow,
Hampden did forego,
And glad he could escape so."

It was the name of the third manor in this rhyme that suggested to Scott the title of his well-known novel.

In Henry V.'s reign we find another allusion. When Henry determined on his invasion of France, he sent a defiance to the Dauphin.

The Dauphin, in reply, sent a load of tennis-balls, intimating that Henry was fitter for such games than for war.

Tennis was also known at the Scotch Court, and once played a part in a horrible tragedy. James I. of Scotland was keeping Christmas at the Monastery of Perth, when a conspiracy was formed to murder him. At night he was standing talking to the Queen and her ladies, when noises were heard outside the door.

He knew danger was approaching, and therefore lost no time, seized the tongs, tore up a plank from the floor, and jumped into a vault beneath.

Meanwhile, the conspirators were at the door, and finding that the draw-bolt was gone, Lady Catherine Douglas, to gain time, thrust her arm through the staples. The conspirators broke her arm in opening the door, but not finding the King in the room, they went back disappointed. The vault in which the King was hiding had a window just above the ground through which he might have escaped, but it had been lately closed up, as the tennis-balls from the court close by were continually rolling in.

The King therefore had to wait while the Queen and her ladies let down sheets to draw him up, but as they were doing so, Lady Elizabeth Douglas fell through, making such a noise that the murderers returned, jumped down the opening and despatched the King.

A game of tennis has been fatal to a King of France, and to a French Dauphin.

The King was Charles VIII., who, in Lent 1498, was staying at the Castle of Amboise. The castle was being altered, and was in great confusion.

Consequently, when, one day after dinner, he was invited to witness a game of tennis in the castle moat, he was obliged, in order to get to the court, to go through a foul passage in the vaults.

While passing through he struck his head against a low arch, but recovered directly, and remained for about two hours watching the game and talking gaily. But on his way back through the passage he fell down insensible.

They brought him a mattress, but neglected to move him into purer air. He lay there, not recognizing any one till eleven o'clock at night, when he died. So much was he lamented, that an archer and butler in his household actually died of grief at his loss.

The Dauphin who died in consequence of a game, was the eldest son of Francis I., and much beloved by the people. His sudden death (1536) raised all kinds of conjectures as to its cause.

The Dauphin's cup-bearer, Count de Montecuculi, declared, while under torture, that he had been instigated by the Imperial generals Gonzago and Leyva to administer poison to his master, and that these generals had done so under the orders of Charles V. himself.

But Charles V. could have no object in removing the Dauphin, as his father was alive, and also two brothers grown up to manhood.

He retaliated by attaching suspicion to Catherine de Medici, who might have poisoned the Dauphin in order to secure the crown to her husband.

But all impartial historians agree in attributing the Dauphin's death to his having drunk too freely of cold water after overheating himself at a quick game of tennis.

The game must have been interesting in Elizabeth's day, if we may judge from an anecdote which has been handed down to us.

In the year 1581, the Duc d'Alencon reappeared in England as a suitor to Elizabeth, just at the time when Campion the Jesuit had been condemned to death. A French Abbe besought the Duke to intercede for Campion's life.

The Duke was in a tennis-court about to begin a game, when the Abbe came to him. He listened, hesitated, stroked his face, and then turning away, exclaimed "Play!" Campion was executed.

Nowadays, our modern tennis-courts are given up to social, rather than to political, combinations such as those which we have instanced.

HE who knows only his own side of the case, knows little of that.

Scientific and Useful.

ASBESTOS HAT-LININGS.—Hats are now being made with an asbestos lining to the crown. Asbestos is so well known as a non-conductor of heat that the advantage of its use for this purpose will be readily seen.

MOTIVE-POWER.—Engineering circles have recently been much interested in the invention of a new motive-power which is produced by a series of minute noiseless explosions of a special kind of gun-cotton. For all purposes of light locomotion and for driving light machinery it is said to be capable of superseding steam. Private experiments having proved satisfactory, arrangements are being made to give the invention a public trial.

A TEST FOR PETROLEUM.—A German chemist, gives the following simple test for ascertaining whether a sample of petroleum is sufficiently volatile to be dangerous. Fill a glass three-parts full with the petroleum to be tested, and fill up the glass with boiling water, at the same time holding a flame over it. If the vapor disengaged becomes ignited, the petroleum should not be considered a safe liquid to leave exposed to the air.

AXES.—This was the way a country blacksmith was seen removing that portion of an ax handle from the ax that remained in the eye, the break being close to the iron: The wood could not be driven out, and, as nails had been driven in at the end, could not be bored out. He drove the bit of sharp edge into some moist earth and then built a fire around the projecting part. The wood was soon charred so that it was easily removed. The moist earth so protected the tempered part of the ax that it sustained no injury.

A FANCY CLOCK.—A novel form of clock has recently been designed: the face taking the form of a tambourine decorated with a wreath of twelve flowers at equal distances apart. These mark the hours, and over them glide two gaily-painted butterflies, one larger than the other. These are the hands, the larger indicating the minutes, the smaller the hours. The works are concealed behind the tamborine, and the motions of the butter-flies, which are made of magnetic metal, are produced by magnets carried on the arms forming the real hands of the clock.

MASTIC CEMENTS.—Mastic cements for brickwork are generally mixtures of one hundred parts each of sand, limestone, and litharge, with seven parts of linseed-oil. These ingredients, carefully mixed and well worked together, will have the consistency of moist sand, but little coherence. When pressed however, the mixture gradually acquires the hardness of ordinary sandstone. A waterproof mastic cement consists of one part of red lead to five parts of ground lime and five parts of sharp sand with boiled oil, or one part of red lead to five of whiting and ten of sharp sand mixed with boiled oil.

Farm and Garden.

INSECTS-EATERS.—Guineas and turkeys are excellent foragers, and destroy a large number of insects in a season.

FATTENING.—To fatten poultry quickly confine the birds for ten days and feed them on a mixture of cornmeal and potatoes four times a day, with all the wheat and corn they can eat at night.

PETROLEUM.—A French paper says that petroleum destroys all insects, and banishes rats and mice, and that water slightly impregnated with petroleum applied to plants infected with insects will destroy them.

TOADS AND BEES.—Toads will eat bees; hence they should be guarded against when locating the hive. Every bee that falls to the ground when overloaded with pollen will be seized by a toad if the latter be under the hives.

HORSES AND DRUGS. Never allow drugs to be administered to your horses without your knowledge. They are not needed to keep the animal in good health, and may do the greatest and most sudden mischief.

STAGNANT WATER.—Stagnant water is detrimental to all kinds of crops, and for that reason all fields should be tiled or underdrained in some manner. Underdrainage carries off the surplus water and allows more air and heat to enter the earth.

MANURE VALUE.—In estimating the value of a manure or fertilizer always take into consideration the cost of hauling the same to the fields, as well as the facility with which it can be applied. Very bulky material, though valuable, may sometimes cost more than it is worth if hauled long distances or over heavy ground.

VERMIN.—A stock raiser reports that he destroys lice on cattle by boiling potatoes until they are thoroughly cooked, then removing the potatoes, allowing the water to boil down to one half the quantity to increase its strength. The water is then used on the animals as a wash. Two quarts of potatoes boiled in three gallons of water are the proper proportions.

WEEDS.—Many weeds may be used profitably as food for hogs. The narrow-leaved plantain possesses nearly the same nutritive value as timothy, while lamb's quarter and pig weed are both highly relished by swine. It is best not to allow any weeds to grow; yet they should be utilized as much as possible in case they have made growth.

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At the Top of the Hill.

Some writers have made climbing Life's hill like the climbing of one in reality. Once arrived there, many a climber thinks he is too high for jealousy to reach or for spite to wound. And so it may be, for, fortunate to the last, Fate often enough calls him away suddenly before he turns his back on the sun, and has to begin that descent which has always to be faced, and which, either as old age, or failing powers, or lessened income, can never be anything save a bitter and trying promenade.

There are others who imagine that once the hill top is reached, they may behave there precisely as they themselves like best. They forget how far a figure is seen against the sky-line, and take advantage of their exalted position to cast conventionalities, aye, and even decencies, to the winds, believing themselves to be too tall, too grand, for the earthworms behind them to criticise, much less condemn.

Still, apart from these, it is well to remember that all of us, even the very meanest among us, is higher at times than someone else, and that few exist whose example or whose actions do not form either a guide or a warning to some poorer neighbor.

Sometimes we realize this with a shudder, as we hear that words we have forgotten ourselves, either written or spoken, have influenced someone immensely with whom we may be personally unacquainted.

Or we may be brought face to face with the fact that extravagant living, or silly and bad management in our own house, may have been copied by a neighbor, and what in our own case resulted only in temporary embarrassment has brought him to ruin; and we learn, too late, that carefulness on our part would have helped him to bear privations that only became unendurable when we appeared to be able to have everything, and rather more than we required.

Of course we should all be strong enough to stand firm; but few of us are; and to those few we all look, recognizing their position, and being bitterly disappointed if they do not come up to our expectations. For there are some who are actually and forcibly put on the top of a hill, without either desiring or deserving to be there.

The lover places his lady at a very high altitude, and revenges it on the wife if she does not keep a situation in which he himself put her.

The child elects his parents to a height even surpassing that of the adored one. And who can express the agony that child endures when either father or mother fails him, and show themselves as they are, and not as the child believed them to be?

The pain is none the less real, the husband's disgust none the less hard to bear, because the pinnacle was never desired by the person who was placed there, and who, we doubt not, is extremely glad to get down therefrom and stand once more on a safer and lower level.

We all of us must realize that period of middle age that sometimes is the only appreciable height we can reach; when we turn to grasp the hand, if only for a farewell, that gave us once so much assistance, and find we only clasp a shadow; when we look back and see our path is marked by tombstones; and when we discover that eager-eyed youth has parted company with us, and that instead of laughter and song, sorrow and fatigue have taken up their stand by our side.

Others have seen and spoken with those of whom we hear no more, save from memory; and as we rest for a while on our summit, content to gaze even upon the tombstones that have marked our way, we seem nearer now than we ever were to those who passed from our lives when we were in the thick of the fray in the valley, and had scarcely time to say good-bye to, because the future was then so much more to us than the present.

The present and the past become very real on the top of the hill.

Life is gentle, is slow. It has done us so much harm, dealt us so many blows, we feel its worst is over. It has taught us so many lessons, we cannot have any more to learn; and for the few years we remain there, we can look back or simply rest happily, contentedly, because our climbing days are over at least and the worst of the work is done.

Delightful as is the eminence occupied by genius, or taken possession by talent, or gained by wealth, it is too dangerous, too lonely to be really happy; the way up to the summit must mean exertion and toil. Therefore, surely, the best height of all is that calm, beautiful table-land of middle-age, where we rest a while, contemplating the long line of pictures time has painted for us, numbering those nobler, stronger natures who have won their rest, and only looking forward for our children, or towards that marvellous land of shadows where they walk who were once with us here, and who seem very near indeed to us once more as we linger for a while silently, thankfully, on the top of our own particular hill.

Living subserviently to the selfish feelings must lower the whole organization; the irritated, disordered mind depresses and degrades the physical functions. Heart, stomach, liver, kidneys, can not do their normal work under such mental conditions. They need the stimulus of buoyancy, cheerfulness and enthusiasm. Hence it is that good-natured, hearty, cordial people are, as a rule, stout and well. It is sheer folly to encourage a sullen, carping, irritable, terrier-like habit. One may be unfortunate, subject to daily vexations, but it makes the situation worse to worry and brood over it, whereas by exercising the faculties of faith, hope, determination, and even that of wit, he will the easier adapt himself to the situation, and the easier find ways of relief. People are much more ready to help a patient, cheerful man when in trouble, than your woe-begone, sodden-faced martyr. The moral, religious and esthetic elements are given us for the very purpose of making our life pleasant, and he who does not bring them into use at all times in some way, robs himself of the best means of enjoyment; rejects the most powerful helps toward his advancement in true manhood.

I have known sagacious men to hold that perfect frankness in expressing the thoughts is a sure sign of imperfect friendship; something is always suppressed, and it is not he who loves you that "tells you candidly what he thinks" of your person, your pretensions, your children, and your poems. Perfect candor is dictated by envy or some other unfriendly feeling, making friendship a stalking horse under cover of which it shoots the arrows which will rankle. Friendship is candid only when candor is urgent—meant to avert impending danger or to rectify an error. The candor which is an impertinence never springs from friendship. Love is sympathetic.

It is one of the strange inconsistencies of human nature that men prefer to do good through the medium of benevolence rather than through that of justice. It is not uncommon to find the seller exerting every energy to get more than a fair price for his goods, and the buyer putting forth equal efforts to obtain them for less than their true value, and yet both subsequently uniting to found some charitable institution, to uphold a church, to promote a reform, to relieve distress. There are men who will grind the faces of the poor in the morning, and in the afternoon subscribe a good round sum to provide them with food and shelter. There are women, both wealthy and of moderate means, who will drive sharp and hard bargains, and will give only the smallest possible sum to those whom they employ to work for them, yet who will willingly give far more than they thus save when a tale of distress arouses their sympathies and excites their pity. The most extensive schemes of philanthropy cannot atone for a single act of injustice.

Change and consistency are by no means incompatible. The principle of life includes that of growth, and all growth is indicated by change. The entire history of the plant, from the tiny seed swelling in the soil to the full luxuriance of blossom or fruit, is one of change in growth, and is thus, and only thus, a consistent whole. The life of the human body, from frail infancy to sturdy manhood, is one continuous series of changes, each of which is needful to its perfection. If this be so in all life, why should an exception be made in the life of the mind and the heart? Certainly, if this may not change, the very centre of all life itself must be suspended. It will however, be conceded that the changes of mental growth from early life to maturity are rightful and needful.

We are right in deploring the distance that exists between our life as it is and as we know it ought to be; but we should have still greater cause for sorrow did we find our conceptions of purity, love, truth and goodness fading from our minds. Those who simply hold these ideals in an indolent and self-indulgent way, never transforming them into action or infusing them into daily life, will soon lose them altogether. Their continuance depends upon the use that is made of them. They are not simply to be admired, reverenced and cherished—they are to be obeyed. If we do not render them this obedience, they will flit from us and leave us poor indeed.

Some people talk as if the whole object of life was to obtain liberty, instead of the whole object of liberty being to attain a higher and fuller life. To be free to speak, to write and to act just as we choose is certainly a thing to be desired; but a far higher aspiration than this would be that we should only choose to speak, to write, or to do that which is true, fitting and valuable.

You will find existence full of sweet savor if you do not expect from it what it cannot give. When people complain of life it is usually because they have asked impossible things from it. There is but one foundation for a happy life—the love of the good and of the true.

Let me ask myself, as in the sight of God, what is the general turn of my temper and disposition of my mind? My most trifling words and actions are observed by Him, and every thought is naked to His eye.

It is an observation no less just than common, that there is no stronger test of a man's real character than power and authority, exciting, as they do, every passion, and discovering every latent vice.

It is no great matter to live lovingly with good-natured, humble and meek persons; but he who can do so with the forward, wilful, ignorant, peevish and perverse has true charity.

Endeavor to be first in thy calling, whatever it be: neither let any one go before thee in well-doing. Nevertheless, do not envy the merits of another, but improve thine own talents.

The highest point outward things can bring us unto is contentment of mind, with which no estate can be poor; without which all estates would be miserable.

The World's Happenings.

The raising of olives is a new Mississippi industry.

A schoolmaster at Lodi, Cal., whipped fifteen girls because they turned up their noses at him.

It rained straight ahead in portions of New Hampshire for the two weeks ending Monday, June 6.

A Paris journal devoted to woman's rights wants the position of meat inspectors for the French capital given to women.

In Thomas county, Kansas, all the townships are named after soldiers of the Eighth Kansas who were killed at Chickamauga.

Prince Albert Victor, eldest son of the English Crown Prince, is to travel in America. He will be attended by half a dozen noblemen.

There is in London a "society of lady dressmakers," to which only aristocratic young women belong. They make their own dresses.

Governor Hill says his favorite way of spending a summer's evening is to lean back in a chair on the piazza of his house "and reflect."

A new use for the tobacco plant has been discovered. Its stems and waste, it is claimed, are equal to linen rags in the manufacture of paper.

The unmarried ladies of Newton, N. J., have formed an anti-vice association, and resolved to boycott all young men who drink liquor or use tobacco.

A debtor's gallery has been published by a Winnepeg, Manitoba, photographer, who had plainly marked on each portrait the amount the subject owed him.

A woman has become mayor of a Kansas city, another clerk of a police court in New Hampshire, and still another pilot on a Lake Champlain steamboat.

Mr. Swift, the "dressed beef king," has signs all over his business premises in Chicago, "No profane language allowed here." He is a frequent leader in prayer meeting.

A canvass of the female teachers in the public schools of Brooklyn shows that a large majority are opposed to the appointment of any of their sex on the governing board.

At Berlin profiles of criminals are taken by the police authorities so as to show the left ear. The features change and the ear does not, and no two persons have identical ears.

It is now proposed to cremate the dead by electricity. The bodies, it is said, will be instantly consumed without causing any odor, and only a handful of ashes will be left.

Among the wedding presents received by a Brooklyn couple was a bronze greyhound, which was an accurate representation of a dog to which the groom had been much attached.

Lumber made of brick, or terra cotta lumber and brickwood, is a modern substitute for wood, which is finding quite a market. It is said to be incombustible as well as light and strong.

Gathering potato bugs is quite a lucrative business in parts of Virginia, and as high as $2 a day is earned by some of the women engaged in it. Compensation is at the rate of five cents per "yeast powder" can full of the insects.

About ten years ago, John R. Quarles, of Melton, Louisa county, Va., lost his watch in a field on his farm, and a few days since plowed it up. It was in good order and condition, and on being wound up ran to perfection.

"Pinafore" is soon to be revived in New York amid realistic surroundings. It will be given upon the deck of a ship, anchored in real water, and furnished with masts, yards, sails, etc., which have been made from models of a man-of-war.

In the absence of a stretcher, a coffin was found the most available substitute at the scene of an accident, in a remote section of New York State, last week, and in it one of the injured was laid and carried to the nearest physician for treatment.

The public executioner in Austria is a government official, with a fixed salary and certain perquisites, and a staff of helpers under him. He is attired in a showy uniform, with a cocked hat and jack-boots, and rides up to the scaffold on a prancing steed under military escort.

The shrewdest tramp of the times has just turned up in a neighboring town. A ragged, lame and dirty fellow visited the stores in succession and begged a cake of soap. The purpose was so apparent that he was rarely refused. After putting in a day solid at this he held an auction at night and disposed of his day's plunder, which was large.

A new paper will shortly be issued in London, with a very novel object. Its function is to point out the errors into which its contemporaries fall, and, as far as possible, to ascertain the names of the writers of the various articles. It will be published twice a week, and the directors of the enterprise have assumed for it the appropriate name of the "Nettle."

A facetious engineer on a steamer lying at Wheeling, W. Va., wanting to hoax a deck hand named Boley, recently, suddenly turned on the mud valve of the boilers, at the same time yelling to Boley to jump. Boley sprang from the deck into the river and was swept away. A small boy, named Eugene Portney, fell over a large stone into deep water and was also drowned.

A large mastiff tried to pull from the rails an elderly unknown woman he was accompanying, some days ago, as she walked on the track of the Concord and Portsmouth, N. H., railroad. The engineer of an approaching train saw this quite distinctly and whistled repeatedly. The engine struck and instantly killed the woman, and after the accident the dog howled piteously and refused to leave the body.

A grand jury in Gainesville, Ga., it is related, had found, some years ago, a bill of indictment against a person for carrying concealed weapons. One of the jurors arose and said: "We have found a bill against that man; now let us search the Grand Jury for concealed weapons." It was found that he, the foreman, and five other jurors had pistols in their pockets. When they recovered from the shock of this discovery the indictment was torn up and thrown away.

SUMMER SHOWERS.

BY G. C. H.

As light and shade show off each other,
And tears and smiles look well together,
So we love our Summer showers,
That christen all our favorite flowers.

A sunny sky begins the day;
Clouds gather soon, and Nature weeps;
The sun comes out with cheerful ray,
With golden light the landscape steeps.

Life is made up of Summer showers;
Clouds and sunshine fill our days;
Grief and joy ring to the hours
And form the theme of all our lays.

All smiles would only make us weary;
All tears would make our life but dreary.
We want the leaves, we want the flowers,
That come to us with Summer showers.

An Eventful Night.

BY E. F. KERR.

IT was a winter night. The keen sharp winds of "unkind December" were whistling around a comfortable English manor-house, and the snow, which had thrown its pure white mantle over the sleeping earth, was still falling silently.

Neither wind nor cold, however, could penetrate the warm crimson curtains that draped the windows of the great hall, upon the walls of which the blazing fire threw ruddy flickering lights, and at one end of which sweet voices and gay laughter made merry ringing music.

A numerous party had met to spend Christmas under the hospitable roof of General Colville. The guests could never be too many for the taste of the venerable host, who loved to be surrounded by the smiling faces of children.

On this special occasion they had mustered in greater force than usual. Sons and daughters who had been in distant lands had returned to meet once more under the roof beneath which they had been born, and they had brought with them troops of rosy-cheeked youngsters.

Wearied with their exertions in the game and dance, the young folk had grouped themselves round the fire to tell and listen to the tales of ghostly terror and wild adventure to which the youthful mind is ever partial. There was a pause at length, for the stock of the young narrators was well-nigh exhausted.

"Tell us your story now, grandfather!" cried a bright maiden of some sixteen summers.

"Oh, yes, do!" came in clamorous chorus from the lively group at the welcome suggestion.

"It is such an old story, and you have heard it so often!" was the grandfather's response.

'Not too often, grandpa! It's such a jolly yarn!" declared one of the younger boys.

"And we have never heard it at all!" broke from the Indian and Australian cousins.

The old General liked to tell his story to willing auditors, and he smiled pleasantly as he replied—

"Well, I suppose I must. Correct me if I go wrong, you youngsters. Any one of you could tell it as well as I by this time."

"Nobody could tell it half as well; and you never go wrong, dear grandfather!" said the soft voice of the maiden of sixteen.

The General loved the speaker, and he proceeded to clear his throat by way of introduction, glancing fondly at the beaming faces around him.

"I shall have to take you a long way back into the past, young people," he began, "for my story—which is a true one—happened in days which you know only by your history-books. The hero of it was a gallant French officer, long since dead, from whose own lips I heard it, and the time was the year 1815, when the first Napoleon's escape from Elba had set all Europe in a blaze.

"Emile Golugent was a Captain in the French army, then stationed in Belgium. He was young, active and brave, and, possessing these qualifications, he was specially selected one day by his General for a mission involving some risk—the conveyance of important despatches to Paris. The notice given to him was brief, and he was instructed to start with as little delay as possible, and alone.

"Accordingly an hour or two later saw him on his way, mounted on the best horse he could obtain. One trusty friend, however, who had wistfully watched the preparations for departure, contrived surreptitiously to join him, taking care not to appear within sight till the Captain had gone some distance from the camp. It was Cæsar, a great Newfoundland dog devotedly attached to his master; and with canine sagacity he had managed to baffle the precautions of the latter for leaving him behind.

"The way lay through the forest of Ardennes, which was at that time the resort of many wild and lawless characters, who took advantage of the disturbed state of the country to live by robbery and violence. The young officer was probably not aware of the ill-fame attaching to the neighborhood he had to traverse; but, had it been otherwise, he was not one to be easily impressed by the fear of dangers, rumored or real.

"It was already growing dusk when he reached the edge of the forest, when Cæsar, suddenly appearing on the scene, notified by his triumphant bark that he had outwitted his master, and intended to accompany him on his journey.

"The night threatened to be stormy. The wide-spreading branches of the great forest trees were creaking and groaning as the wind swayed them to and fro. Heavy clouds came driving upwards before the freshening gale, and, as they covered the darkening sky, big rain-drops began to fall with a pattering sound on the shivering leaves. Captain Golugent scolded his faithful dog, but Cæsar only wagged his tail, and could not be persuaded to return home. He had won the day.

"His master was fain to yield to his will, and Cæsar followed with an appearance of penitence, as the Captain turned his horse's head towards a narrow bridle-path which seemed to run in the same direction as the wide and more frequented high-road through the forest, with the advantage of being more secluded. The twilight was deepening into night, and the young crescent moon, sinking to rest, left the scene dark and cheerless.

"The Captain rode on for some time, meeting not a single human being, but feeling no misgivings as to the directness of the route he had taken. He knew that there was a kind of half-way house in the heart of the forest, where he intended to stop for a few hours to rest his horse and take some refreshment. He expected to reach it about midnight.

"The path became more and more overshadowed by the trees, through the leaves of which the rain was dripping steadily. The darkness compelled the Captain to slacken his pace. At length the narrow path suddenly grew wider, and he could discern before him a tall object of a light color faintly visible through the surrounding gloom. Proceeding towards it, he found himself at the meeting of four crossways, and he saw that the object which had attracted his attention was a great crucifix.

"He stopped for a moment to consider which of the diverging ways he should take, and then rode on again, as he believed, in the same direction as before.

"An hour or longer might have passed when he stopped again, now with an exclamation expressive of great vexation. He had pulled up once more in front of the tall wooden crucifix at the meeting of the crossways. The weird ghostly landmark told him but too plainly that he had been riding in a circle, and had lost his way.

"The discovery was the more unwelcome because he was totally at a loss which o the roads to take—they looked so much alike. In his perplexity he threw the reins loosely on his horse's neck, and resolved to trust himself to the sagacity of the animal. He felt confident that the half-way house could not be very far distant, and thought that the instinct of the horse, which had probably often trod the way before, would be his best guide to the spot where doubtless it had found food and shelter ere now.

"Nevertheless he could not help feeling some uneasiness as to the result of his experiment. The darkness was oppressive, and the silence unbroken, save by the soughing of the wind as it rushed over the tree-tops and swept the cold sleety rain with blinding force into his face. The way seemed long and weary, but it was some consolation to the traveller to observe that the horse, albeit his step was growing heavy with fatigue, yet plodded on with a steady directness which seemed to argue an object in view. Cæsar slunk wistfully behind.

"At length the Captain's straining eyes perceived the faint twinkle of a light in the distance. The jaded horse saw it too, for he pricked up his ears and quickened his pace, while the dog uttered a short glad bark and bounded forward. The Captain pressed onward with renewed alacrity in the direction of the light, which tantalized him by disappearing ever and anon as the road wound in and out among the trees.

"Suddenly the silence of the night was broken momentarily by a wild shrill cry which seemed to pierce the darkness. The dog stopped and uttered a low angry growl, and Captain Golugent reined in his horse to listen. The deathlike stillness had resumed its sway, and the Captain listened in vain for a repetition of the sound.

"'Pshaw!' said the officer, in answer to his thoughts. 'It was nothing—only the hooting of an owl or a curlew's cry!'

"He spurred his horse, impatient of the delay, and rode on till, after a while, the wooded path opened out on to a cleared space. Here the friendly light beamed full upon him from a short distance, and he could see that it proceeded from the window of a house the outlines of which it disclosed.

"It was a two-storied building, and might be either a rustic hostelry or some forester's lodge. In either case it would surely be able to afford him such simple accommodation as would suffice for his needs, and he would be able to obtain information there regarding his route.

"A few more minutes' ride brought him to the threshold of the house, and, alighting from his horse, he knocked eagerly for admittance.

"There was no immediate response to his knock, but he could plainly detect the sound of whispering voices, and steps moving hurriedly within. After waiting for a time that to his impatience seemed unconscionably long, he knocked again, more loudly than before.

"There was another pause, and then the door was slowly, cautiously opened, just sufficiently to allow a head to be partly thrust out, as if to reconnoitre. The head was withdrawn again directly. It might be that the sight of the stranger's military uniform had aroused alarm.

"'Hallo!' cried a voice from within. 'Who are you? What do you want here at this time of night?'

"The man who spoke held the door ajar, and contrived to throw the light of the lamp he held upon the face of the traveller.

"'I want a bed and supper for myself and for my horse,' replied Captain Golugent. 'This is the "Traveller's Rest," I presume, and you the host?'

"'Traveller's Rest!' cried the man rudely. 'It is nothing of the sort! You have left the "Traveller's Rest" far on the other side. This house is only intended for waggoners and such like—not for fine gentlemen like you.'

"He was about to slam the door unceremoniously in Golugent's face, but the Captain, who had no idea of being thwarted in that fashion, brushed past him. The man continued to protest nevertheless, in surly tones. He was a tall thick-set man, with a greasy cap drawn low over a shock head of dark hair and partially concealing his face, and his voice was coarse and rough.

"'I tell you,' he said, 'there is no room for you.'

"'Oh, nonsense!' interrupted the Captain, who was nettled at this reception. 'Don't you see, man, that I have lost my way? I shall give you no trouble. I must put up for a few hours till the daylight comes; it is too dark to proceed. Anything will do for me. Do you hear?' he added impatiently, as the fellow stood stock still before him.

"At this moment a second man came forward from one of the recesses of the place. He was older than the first, but, though his locks and eyebrows were grizzled by the hand of time, it was evident that his sinewy frame had lost none of its vigor. His small keen eyes sparkled furtively beneath their bushy brows, and his obsequious manner contrasted with that of the other.

"Captain Golugent had no time to examine his countenance, his one object being to obtain admission and shelter. He did not notice either how the old man's keen eyes wandered in a rapid investigation over his person, or how they marked the gold watch-guard, a portion of which peeped out from underneath his coat, and the well-filled valise in his hand; but the scrutiny satisfied the old man, and he bowed with officious civility.

"'Bah, *mon fils*,' he cried—'you do not know! Come in—come in, monsieur; we will accommodate you! True, it is but a poor house; but, if monsieur will be indulgent, we can give him a bed. I charge myself with it, my son—I will arrange the chamber.' Then, in an 'aside' to the other man, he added, 'Are you a fool?'

"At this diversion the younger man subsided into sullen silence. He still stood irresolute however.

"Captain Golugent glanced round the room on the threshold of which he stood during the brief colloquy. It was tolerably large, but scantily furnished, and communicated with a tap-room beyond. The floor and walls were of a dingy hue, and a strong smell of spirits and bad tobacco pervaded the place. The survey was not exhilarating, but in the circumstances he could not afford to be fastidious.

"'Well,' he said, 'get me something to eat, for I am hungry, and so is my horse.'

"'In an instant!' was the brisk reply; and the two men went away together with the horse—one still silent and reluctant, the other bustling and obsequious.

"Golugent could hear them muttering as they went. Evidently the younger of the two was an ill-tempered fellow, and the Captain thought he would go out and see that his horse was properly attended to.

"The stable, which was only a few yards distant from the dwelling-house, was a wooden building of inconsiderable size. He joined the two men just as they reached the door. They eyed him curiously.

"'I wish to see how my horse is lodged,' he said, in an explanatory tone. 'That is always my habit when travelling.'

"'Perfectly!' cried the older man. 'You are right, monsieur—quite right! Well, I leave you here with my son. I go to prepare the chamber and the supper for monsieur.'

"The other, left alone with his guest, rubbed down the horse, and flung some oats before the animal, while the officer looked on.

"It was some time before the father returned. At length, however, he appeared in the doorway.

"'Supper is ready, monsieur.'

"'All right! It is not too soon, for I am hungry. Come, Cæsar!'—to the dog, who had been mutely watching the proceedings.

"'What,' cried the old man, in perturbation—'would monsieur think of taking that dog into the house? Pardon, but monsieur is reasonable! It is a beast much too large for the house, and he is wet and muddy—monsieur will see that. Better leave him here to make company for his comrade the horse.'

"'Oh, very well,' responded the Captain, who thought it wisest to conciliate his host—'he can remain here if you don't like him inside! But he is a noisy customer when left alone in a strange place, and will keep you awake.'

"'I have brought something to console him,' said the old man, with restored urbanity.

"So saying, he threw down a piece of meat before the dog.

"Cæsar looked at the meat with a kindling eye, but hesitated for a moment before seizing it. He was a discriminating animal, and had conceived an instinctive dislike to the person who offered him the food which his appetite keenly desired. After a brief pause he compromised matters by exhibiting his sharp white teeth and uttering a low defiant growl; then he addressed himself to the coveted morsel, eyeing the donor suspiciously the while.

"'The deuce,' exclaimed both men, what a vicious brute it is!'

"They retreated hastily to the door, and, Captain Golugent having followed them out, they closed it promptly. There was no lock to the door, but one of them took care to draw the rusty bolt which was its only fastening.

"Having notified his intention of resuming his journey at earliest dawn, Captain Golugent re-entered the dwelling-house with his hosts.

"Supper was spread in the parlor. It was a scanty meal, composed of fragments of cold meat and stale bread and cheese, accompanied by a bottle of execrable wine.

"While he made the best of the unappetizing repast, the old man signed to his taciturn son to accompany him up-stairs. They came back after a little while, and the father, having announced that the bed-chamber was now in readiness, took up a candle and led the way.

"'Sleep well, monsieur!' he said; and, having placed the candle on the table and inquired whether his guest had any further wants, he bowed himself out of the room.

"As the obsequiously-smiling face disappeared through the doorway, the eyes of host and guest met for a moment, and the Captain was suddenly struck by the villainous expression of his entertainer.

"'Heavens,' he said involuntarily, 'what an evil-looking fellow it is!'

"The impression left was so unpleasant that he mechanically locked the door after him, and lighted a cigar to banish the recollection. The expedient restored his

equanimity, and the impression faded in the curling smoke.

"With a placid curiosity he surveyed the apartment from the chair in which he sat. It was a long room, and the furniture, like that of the one below, was worn and faded. A great old-fashioned bedstead, heavily curtained, stood in an alcove at the farther end. Its dark draperies had a gloomy funereal air which was not inviting; but Captain Golugent had slept in beds that were not more alluring.

"The single candle illumined the room but dimly, and left the more distant corners in semi-obscurity. Having finished his cigar, the Captain thought he would prepare to go to rest. He laid his valise on a chair and placed his watch on the dressing-table.

"He then took out his pocket-pistol and examined it. To his annoyance he found that only one chamber was loaded, and that in the hurry of his departure he had left his bullets behind him. In vain he blamed himself for carelessness so unusual with him. It was too late to remedy it now, and he could only hope that he might have no occasion to use a defensive weapon during his journey.

"Then he took a fancy to inspect the bed, of the cleanliness of which he was very doubtful. To his surprise and satisfaction, he found that the sheets were fresh and white, and the trifling circumstance had the effect of giving him for the moment a better opinion of his hosts than he had hitherto held. Nevertheless—he could not have told why, such a practice not being at all usual with him—he proceeded to look under the bed also, and mechanically stooped to raise the valance that encircled it.

"At first sight there seemed to be nothing deserving of notice under the sheltering folds of the dingy drapery. He saw an empty coal-scuttle and a couple of brooms and fire-irons that seemed to have been put there to be out of the way. At the head of the bed, against the wall, there was a great bale of old carpeting rolled up lengthways.

"He was about to let the drapery fall after this less satisfactory inspection when the light from his candle fell directly on that end of the long bale which was turned towards him, and he perceived that there was something wrapped up inside the carpeting and slightly protruding from the edges.

"The 'something' had a grizzled appearance, and, arguing from the other objects hidden under the bed, he took it at first sight for the brush of a mop or long Turks-head broom. But, as he looked, a strange creeping thrill passed through his frame.

"Was it really a broom? he asked himself, with vague dissatisfaction.

"The indefinable doubt was so pressing that he stooped again and touched the object that puzzled him; but he had scarcely done so when he drew back his hand with a sudden start. The thing he had touched was not bristling, as he had expected, but yielded softly to his hand. A horrible suspicion flashed across his mind.

"Candle in hand, he knelt down beside the bed, feeling compelled to solve the mystery. His touch, slight as it had been, had disturbed the loosely-rolled folds of the carpet, and, as he bent to look, he saw that the protruding object was the head of a dead man!

"He drew the heavy bale forward with feverish eagerness. A white ghastly face lay before him. Its eyes, unclosed and glassy, were set in the wild fear of the last death-struggle, and they seemed to appeal to him with mute but terrible eloquence. Captain Golugent placed his hand upon the lifeless brow, and started again.

"It was still quite warm!

"He was certain now that the corpse before him was that of a murdered man, the victim of very recent violence, as the lingering warmth told plainly.

"Conflicting thoughts surged wildly through his brain. Had the deed been done for vengeance or robbery? If robbery, what were his chances of escaping a similar doom? Were the two men he had seen the only occupants of the house, or had he fallen into the power of some murderous gang? He had no means of ascertaining.

"He remembered suddenly and with sickening distinctness the cry that he had heard while still at a short distance in the forest. It resounded now in his ears like a wild haunting wail. He knew its significance now, for he felt sure that it had been the death-cry of the helpless man at his feet.

"Other circumstances confirmed his conclusions. He remembered the delay there had been in the opening of the door, the churlish embarrassment of his reception, and he had no longer any difficulty in accounting for either.

"He had disturbed the perpetrators of the deed by arriving at their door too soon, before the vestiges of their crime could be removed out of sight.

"The horrible discovery, which was so unexpected, held him spellbound for a moment; but he soon roused himself to consider the emergency.

"Should he go down and face the two miscreants he had seen? Single-handed as he was, and with a solitary bullet at his disposal, with the additional uncertainty, moreover, as to possible numbers with whom he might have to contend, such a course seemed foolhardy.

"He had the safety of his despatches to consider as well as that of his own life. His best course seemed to consist in defending himself within that chamber, which looked secure enough.

"Accordingly he went softly to the door, and noiselessly tested the strength of the lock. It seemed in good order, and, by way of additional security, he drew a bolt which he found within. He would wait, he thought, for the dawn, and chance getting away then.

"Having examined the door, he returned to the bed, where he had left the corpse partly protruding from underneath the valance. It looked so ghastly that he thought he would put it out of sight again. Having done so, he took up his candle, which he had deposited in the meanwhile on a chair near the bedside, and was moving towards the door, where he thought it would be best to take up his position, in case of its being attacked, when he stopped short suddenly.

"The light had fallen on the side of the alcove, and he saw there a line descending perpendicularly along the wall to the ground. The paper that covered it was of an intricate pattern, and it was at this spot shaded by the ample drapery of the bed.

"He approached closer, and the light fell on the wall. He saw then that the perpendicular line which had attracted his attention formed one side of a well-defined doorway cunningly matched into the pattern of the paper. He touched it, and it shook slightly, but it was securely fastened on the outside.

"He stopped with an involuntary gasp. What was the meaning of a door so artfully contrived and in so strange a position? He guessed clearly enough.

"The other door, with its obtrusive fastenings, was but a device to delude the occupant of the room into fancied security. At any moment, and probably without any previous warning, the secret door might open, and he would then be at the mercy of treacherous assassins. He saw with dismay that he was caught like a mouse in a trap. What could he do?

"He stood and thought. With futile regret he remembered his faithful dog shut up in the stable outside, and deplored the easy confidence with which he had consented to their separation. Cæsar was no mean antagonist, and, had the gallant animal been beside him, he might have kept the ruffians at bay. But now the odds against him were heavy.

"Suddenly an idea flashed across his mind. It was horrible and dangerous, but he thought it might possibly succeed, and there was not much time for deliberation, for the peril was pressing. Therefore he proceeded hurriedly to carry out the ghastly plan that suggested itself.

"He drew forth the bale of carpeting from under the bed, and with hasty hand unwound the lifeless body from the dusty folds. It had been partly stripped, and a deep red stain on the left side of the underclothing showed that death had resulted from a stab surely aimed at the heart.

"He lifted the body carefully on to the bed, closed the glassy eyes, and laid the dead man down in an attitude that looked like natural repose; the left side lay uppermost, and the left arm was thrown over the head, leaving the side defenceless; then he drew the coverings well up so as to shade the pallor of the lifeless face.

"He trusted that, when the assassins entered, as they certainly would, to serve him as they had done the other, in their guilty hurry they would not think of looking closely at the figure lying in the bed, and that thus the murderous knife would be used upon the dead instead of upon the living.

"Then he lay down himself under the bed, and drew the folds of the carpet partially over him. He had extinguished the candle, his despatches were in his pocket, and he grasped his pistol, with its solitary bullet, in readiness for the moment of supreme need, should he be called upon to defend his life to the uttermost.

"A pause of dreadful expectation ensued. It was the first time that he, the living man, had lain beside the silent dead. But then he had lain wounded on the battlefield, with the tread of comrades echoing still in the distance, and with the wide pure vault of heaven overhead. Every minute he passed in the murky crime-stained chamber in which he was trapped was infinitely more horrible to him, in its awful silence, than all the weary hours he had spent in helpless suffering on the great plains where the brave dead lay so thick around.

"The house was treacherously still, save when ever and anon a fierce gust of wind shook the crazy window-panes. Ever and anon too the dog in the stable outside uttered an impatient bark or fretful howl, or gave noisier demonstration of his wakefulness by springing angrily against the door that kept him a prisoner. At last, however, the dog too lapsed into silence. Only the watcher under the bed remained vigilantly wakeful, all his senses in an awful and unnatural tension, listening intently in the deep silence of the night.

"A clock on the landing struck twelve. Its slow halting strokes fell sharply on his ear, sounding each like a knell to his excited imagination. As the last stroke died away the heavy oppressive silence resumed its sway.

"Presently there was a faint creaking sound on the worn stairs—stealthy cat-like steps approached cautiously; then there was a pause. The Captain's heart gave a great bound, and he listened breathlessly.

"There was an interval of death-like silence. The person outside was listening too. After a while he seemed satisfied, and a slight fumbling sound was heard, accompanied by the careful turning of a key in a well-oiled lock. There was a low rustle as the paper edges of the secret door parted, and a light streamed in through the aperture.

"The watcher could not see, but he knew what was passing. The assassin was standing on the threshold, as he had thrown the light of his dark-lantern on to the sleeper in the bed. For an instant he hesitated, but the careless attitude of the prostrate form emboldened him.

"'He sleeps sound!'

"The whisper rang through the still air like the hiss of a deadly serpent. It was the old man's call to his son to advance and strike the intended victim of their greed.

"At this critical moment the dog outside awoke, and began to bark furiously, throwing himself with noisy reiterated vehemence against the stable door. Some instinct of danger to his master, aroused perhaps by the sound of steps moving about or by the passing gleam of a light, had disturbed the trusty creature and made him wildly restless.

"His master heard him, with a strange sensation of helplessness, and so did the miscreant intruders.

"'Curse the dog! He will wake him!' hissed the other voice.

"'Don't lose time then! Strike, you fool—strike!'

"The brief colloquy took but a moment, but the short delay seemed an age. There was a hurried stride forward, then a dull thud over his head, and a second, and a third. The great four-post bed shook and creaked as the heavy blows struck the lifeless form that lay there, but the cold steel evoked no cry. With a shuddering gasp the murderer drew back from his foul work.

"'It is well done,' said the remorseless voice of the old man. 'He did not make a noise—that one!'

"He whispered still, as though he feared to wake the dead, but louder now, and with a note of fiendish exultation.

"'Ah, see the fine gold watch—that's well worth the trouble! *Bete*, do you tremble? Bah, let us finish the work at once! I will carry down this one; you take the other to the old well—you know. The night is dark—propitious for our purpose.'

"It was not over yet then—the actual struggle was all to come! Captain Golugent nerved himself for it and, throwing aside the wrappings, waited for the moment when the valance should be raised to spring up and fire, and then close in deadly conflict with his assailant.

"It was a moment of intense excitement—excitement by which fear was overpowered. The Captain was too thoroughly absorbed to notice a circumstance that would otherwise have struck him as peculiar—the furious barking of his dog Cæsar had suddenly ceased.

"There was a little further delay. The murderer hesitated to comply with the suggestion of his father. He was not disposed to do any more work that night, and only yielded reluctantly to his will after a discontented parley. He was, however, just about to lift the valance in order to draw forth the supposed corpse, when a most unexpected interruption took place. The half-opened door flew back on its hinges and a panting creature bounded in and threw itself with wild fury upon the stooping figure of the assassin.

"It was Cæsar! With a furious grip the animal fastened on the outstretched hand of the miscreant, nearly severing his thumb before he could be dislodged. A frightful oath and wild yells of pain rang through the chamber, and the man dropped the valance, while the other came to his rescue and struck at the dog. With much trouble they contrived to reach the door, and to slam it hastily between themselves and their formidable adversary as they retreated terrified and bleeding.

"The gallant animal, though bruised and wounded in the fray, fawned with rapturous joy on his master, who now crept forth unsheathed from his hiding-place, and who, with that trusty friend beside him, felt comparatively safe from further attack.

"The voices of the retreating pair rose high in angry recrimination.

"'You did not bolt the stable door?'

"'I did—I swear I did.'

"'Hold your tongue, you old villain! I would kill you if I could! What pain is this! I am dying! Help—help!'

"The pain and rage of the craven fellow found vent in frantic cries, which sounded more like the roar of some wild beast than any human utterance, and Cæsar replied to them with a growl of mingled fury and triumph.

"No one came near the chamber during the rest of the night. The wounded man needed all the care of the other, and it was not likely that they would risk another encounter with Cæsar unaided. It seemed therefore that there were not any other accomplices within call.

"Captain Golugent waited with more equanimity than he could have expected for the daylight. He occupied himself with his dog, and bound up a gash or two which the noble beast seemed scarcely to heed, as he lay crouching fondly at his master's feet.

"How had he come there? The Captain patted his curly head, and asked the question of himself with bewildered wonder. The great lustrous eyes that beamed on him with such eager intelligence could not explain the mystery.

"Subsequent examination of the stable door, however, gave the clue very plainly. The hasp that had held the bolt was found on the ground, and the bolt was hanging useless on the door. The nails that had held the hasp were old and rusty, and must have given way under the repeated shocks given by the dog as he sprang with violence against the door. Once released from his prison, a few bounds would bring him to the house door, which was unfastened, and his keen scent would promptly guide him to his master's side.

"The night wore away, and gradually the angry cries grew less loud, subsiding into fretful moaning, which was only hushed towards morning.

"At length the gray dawn came creeping in through the unshuttered windows, and Captain Golugent completed his preparations for departure. A distant tinkling made him aware that the world was beginning to stir, and that other human beings were awake and probably not far off. The cheerful sound of the tinkling bells came nearer, and he found to his satisfaction that it proceeded from the teams of some wagoners, who, after a while, appeared within sight, and drew up at the door of the inn to water their horses.

"He judged the moment favorable for his descent. Unlocking the door and holding Cæsar firmly by the collar, he went softly down the front stairs by which he had come up the previous night, and appeared in the doorway of the parlor.

"The old man was there alone, having just returned from serving the customers outside. Turning suddenly round, he found himself confronted by the stranger, whom he believed to be lying dead up stairs. An ashy hue overspread the hardened face, and terror made him drop the glass in his hand. He thought it was the ghost of his victim that stood before him.

"'Bring me my horse!' said Captain Golugent, with stern brevity, vouchsafing no word of explanation.

"The dog bounded forward, and would have seized the man had not his master's hand withheld him. With a cry of fear he hurried away, and returned in a few minutes, trembling in every limb as he led the horse.

"Captain Golugent looked at him with disgust.

"'Go inside,' he said, 'unless you wish to be torn to pieces by my dog, as you deserve to be. I cannot hold him any longer.'

"The man did not wait to be told a second time, and, having fastened the bridle of the horse to a hook by the door, he slunk away silently.

"The wagoners looked on curiously as the officer mounted his horse and rode away sternly and silently; but he judged it wisest not to gratify their evident curiosity. He gave information of the murder which had been committed—and which had so nearly been a double one—at the first police-station which he passed. A few hours later the officers of justice arrived on the spot, but they found the house deserted by its owners, and all traces of the recent murder carefully obliterated.

"It was not till after several years had elapsed that the two miscreants who on this occasion had baffled the pursuit of justice finally suffered the penalty of their crimes. Some other notorious murder was traced to them, and their confession led to their identification as the former hosts of the ill-famed 'Wagoners.' A well-merited though tardy retribution brought father and son to the gallows at last.

"Captain Golugent returned from his errand in safety, and lived for many years to enjoy the distinction and rewards of a gallant though chequered career.

* * * * *

"Cæsar?"

The question broke forth in chorus from the attentive audience, who had listened with bated breath to the General's tale.

"Cæsar lived to a good old age, and was honored and petted as he deserved to the end of his days."

"And is it all really true?" asked one, doubtfully.

"Did I not tell you mine was a true story?" was the grandfather's dignified rejoinder.

Waiting For Him.

BY BERTIE BAYLE.

"IN the first place, swear that you will never reveal what I am about to relate to anyone while I live."

"I never will, I swear it, upon my honor; and that, as you know, has never yet been tarnished."

The scene is in my chamber in the medical college. Time—midnight.

"Very well! When I was a mere boy, Charley, fifteen years ago, I left college, and went on a tour in company with a friend, who had been my "chum" and confidant for four years. He had your name, and something, too, of your look; but nothing of your good kind heart, my boy! After wandering through the Continent, we went back to his father's house, where I was to spend a week, or two before I returned to my home.

"And here I met my evil genius. It was on the first morning of my arrival at her father's house, and Charles was sitting with me on the lawn, talking of our college days, when he suddenly stopped, looked up at the window of the drawing-room, and said, in a low voice, 'You were wishing to see my sister to-day, Titian, and I told you she was not well, and would scarcely come down. But I see she has had courage enough to do so: and—there she is.'

"Leaning on the balcony, and looking up at the morn, which was just rising in the east, I saw her for the first time. I should have taken her for a girl of sixteen, so youthful was the outline of her face and form; and yet she was twenty-eight years old—seven years my senior. I saw that she had the golden hair and the soft blue eyes of the Saxon race, though her brother was as dark and swarthy as a Spaniard. Her features were small and finely chiselled, her complexion a soft blending of pure white and red that was, I suppose, the grand secret of her youthful looks; and though tall, and not without a certain queenliness of look and motion, her atti-

tude had the ease and grace of a young child's. She had a silvery-looking shawl wrapped around her, and one hand held it close to her throat; the other patted the head of a small Italian greyhound by her side.

"I loved her madly and passionately, and I won what others had tried to win in vain. It might have been the perfect abandonment with which I saw my pride and reserve leave me, and threw myself headlong at her feet, that touched her—I do not know. But in six months Ninon was my wife! My disappointed rivals sneered at the disparity in our ages, and predicted that those who married in haste might repent at leisure; but I only laughed at them, and gave myself up to a dream of happiness such as was never vouchsafed to mortal man before. I had never loved, and in my bride some new grace, some new beauty, enslaved me more and more each day. Would to God that I had died then, Charley—I should not have been the man I am now!

"The year was almost done, and Ninon as fond and beautiful as ever, when I was called to the north on important business, for a few days. I had never left her before, and you may imagine what a parting it was. I gave the lawyers no peace by night or day, and nearly drove them wild with my restlessness and impatience. At last, all was done, and I was at liberty to return. It was two days before the time I had appointed, but I sent no letter to say I was coming. I thought I would give my wife a pleasant surprise and clasp her to my heart, even while she slept and dreamed of me. I travelled without stopping to rest or sleep, and on the second evening I dismounted from my horse at the gates of my own home; and, loosening the bridle, left it to find its own way to 'the quarters,' while I stole softly in through a side door, and up a staircase that led to my wife's apartments. I met no one on the way. It was late, and the house was still as death.

"But in my wife's dressing-room a subdued light was burning, and I could catch the scent of the flowers through the open window. I never see one of those pale, sweet blossoms now, without thinking of that night.

"I was just about entering the room—my foot was on the threshold, when I heard a loving murmur—a man's deep voice, and my wife's silvery laugh in reply. I stepped back, feeling faint and giddy. Her brother Charles, I knew, was away. Who, then, was with Ninon at this hour, and in her dressing-room, too? I held my breath and listened.

"'But love, what do you think I have suffered all these weary months?' said the murmuring voice again. 'To know all you have been to me—and yet to know also that I had lost you utterly, and that you were another's—it was worse than death, Ninon!'

"'Do not waste these precious hours in chiding!' she said; and I hardly knew her voice, with the new tone. She had never spoken so to me. 'What other way was there? You had a wife, and my brother swore, when he discovered our secret, that I should marry the boy. I knew how easily he could be duped——'

"'And you were not deceived, my darling. Little does the fond fool think how you have passed the hours of his absence! When does he return?'

"'To-morrow!' she sighed.

"I set my teeth and clenched my hands. But I had not heard enough—I thirsted to know and feel my disgrace more fully, that my revenge might be sweeter. I changed my position, noiselessly, and through the half-open door I could see them plainly. They were sitting on the sofa where she had so often sat with me—his arm around her, and her beautiful golden hair was scattered on his shoulder and breast. It was a pleasant sight for me! I know not which I hated most intensely, at that moment, of the two.

"'And are you sure of your maid, Ninon?'

"'Oh, yes, she has been true to me for years. And no one else is in our secret, or knows that you are even here.'

"He laughed, wickedly.

"'I was thinking of my wife and your husband. What an agreeable surprise it would be for them to see us now? But tell me one thing—has he never suspected anything? The child—what of that?'

"She hid her beautiful face in his breast with a smile, and murmured, 'If he thinks it his own, Clarence, am I to undeceive him?'

"What! was I dreaming? Would they but even leave me that one sweet hope, the hope of holding a child—Ninon's child and mine—in my arms, ere many weeks had passed away? Oh, my God! had I been duped and fooled so miserably as this? The room whirled before me, and if I had not leaned against the wall for support I should have fallen.

"I opened my eyes at last, and looked at them once more. He was a large, fine-formed and handsome man, with the darkest eyes, and hair, and beard I had ever seen. Lying in his arms, my wife looked like a mere child; and her Saxon beauty was heightened by the strong contrast between them. He was no stranger to me. He had often grasped my hand in friendly greeting, often spoken words of courtesy to her, while she leaned upon my arm, and I had never dreamed of this. Even while I thought of all these things, he bent over her, gathering her closer to his breast; she flung her arms around his neck, and her lips were meeting his! Oh! that roused me from the stupor into which I had been plunged so long, and the sharp report of my pistol rang through the room in an instant, and then I was beside them! She screamed and fell at my feet as he fell over sideways back, shot through the heart, and a dead man. I spurned her from me, and rushing from the house I whistled to my horse, who was grazing quietly where I had left him, and rode away like a madman. Before the morning broke I was in France and safe from all pursuit."

He poured out glass after glass of wine, and drank them as if they had been water, while great drops of perspiration stood upon his forehead, and he trembled from head to foot. I could scarcely believe what he had been telling me, when I looked back on the gay, careless and seemingly, untroubled life he had led since I had known him.

"But Ninon—what of her?" I asked at last.

"Listen. After fleeing from my home on that terrible night, I went to America, to one of the wild Western States, and gave myself up to the study of medicine, of which I had always been passionately fond. I heard no more of Ninon—indeed, I dropped all intercourse with the friends who had known her, and tried to forget my folly of a year. By degrees I grew cold and indifferent, and what little heart I had to bestow was given to my profession. I grew more and more absorbed in its secrets, and so much of my time was spent in the lecture-hall and dissecting-room of the college, that my fellow-students used to advise me to take up my abode there altogether, and so avoid the bore of coming home each night to sleep. And I am sure I should have been well pleased to have done so.

"The college was not a well-endowed one: there were few professors, and but little enthusiasm among the classes. But after I came, a subject was started which roused us all—the subject of galvanism.

"It was settled that we should obtain a 'subject' privately, and experiment ourselves, without the knowledge of our professors, who would have put a stop to it. After surmounting a thousand difficulties, the battery was arranged in my own room, a corpse procured, and I deputed to watch at the college gates for its arrival, and see it safely deposited in its hiding place, which I did.

"We had a supper party before beginning our work. I remember how much wine I drank that evening. I was nervous and depressed, though I did not know why, and poured it out like water. It had its due effect, and before the meal was ended I was the life of the assembly—not intoxicated, but gay, and overflowing with mirth and fun. I gave the last toast; and with a levity whose memory makes me shudder now, I proposed the health of our new guest, who was lying so silently before us under a cloth. It was drank with all due honors, and then the table was pushed up at the side of the room, and we prepared for the work of the night.

"We had proposed dissecting the body after our experiments had been tried, and the scalpel and the knives lay ranged at its head, while pails and sponges for catching the blood were lying beneath the boards. On that table stood also three small phials—one containing liquid ammonia, one prussic acid, and the other sulphuric ether. They had all been used during some chemical experiments that afternoon, and had not been taken back to their places in the laboratory.

"I busied myself in arranging the wires of the battery, when an exclamation from the students made me look up.

"'What is it?' I asked.

"'It is a female subject, and the most beautiful form I have ever seen. It seems almost a pity to desecrate——'

"I laughed sarcastically, and stopped him in the speech he was going to make. I hated all women on account of one, and I think I was glad to be able to offer any indignity to her sex. I glanced at the beautifully-moulded form that was extended on the boards, and said, brutally, 'The lovelier the better; she will dance well!'

"They watched me in silence as I arranged the wires; but as the first convulsive tremor played over the body, as softly as the wind might play over a sleeping lake, there was a cry of horror, and they tore me by main force from the battery, and dashed the wires away.

"'Are you mad?' I cried, angrily.

"'Good God! don't you see she is alive?' replied the one who had spoken before. 'See, her eyes are open!'

"'What nonsense!'

"'Well, look for yourself!'

"They drew back, and I went up and bent over her. The eyes did open, and fix upon my face; and oh, my God, they were the eyes of Ninon! The old love and sorrow came back, mingled with a grief and shame that broke my heart. My wife, and thus! I drew the covering over her, and turning to my fellow-students, said fiercely, 'Bring something to restore her.'

"All was bustle and confusion in an instant, for without understanding the sudden change in my manner, they respected it, and a dozen restoratives were on the table beside me; while one man, the one who had first spoken, took the coverlet from the bed, and laid it gently over her. I thanked him with a look, but I could not speak to him. I bent over her, I raised her head up in my arms, and bending my face down to hers, I saw that she began to breathe freely. It was something, at all events, to have her once more so near my heart, even in that hour of agony and remorse.

"All was still as death in the room. You could hear every laboring breath she drew as plainly as if it had been a groan. Slowly, slowly, the light of reason came back to those beautiful eyes, and I saw that she knew me. Alas! it was only a look of terror and loathing she cast upon me! She tried to free herself from my embrace, but she was too weak, and sank back upon my breast, as if she was dying. I snatched a cordial from the table, and held it to her lips. She drank from the phial, and just as I caught sight of the label, I saw that I had given her the prussic acid! I hurled the phial from me with a heavy groan; but it was too late, and she was dying a death which would this time be sure and rapid! I fell upon my knees beside her, and frantically implored her forgiveness, but she hated me then! Her glazing eyes were turned on me to the last, and she gasped out with her last breath, 'Oh, I will haunt you!'

"She has kept her word.

"I am home in England again, under an assumed name.

"I dream of her by night, and she curses me for killing her lover. By day, whenever I am alone, I seem to feel her presence, like some vulture spirit waiting for my death. I will see her again still, I believe, though she is buried thousands of miles away. It's madness, I suppose."

The next morning we were to have a lecture. We all assembled as usual.

The lecturer, knife in hand, stood beside the subject. It was a head.

The cloth was no sooner removed than an awful groan startled us all.

It was Titian, who was standing gazing with a horrified look at the subject.

"Ninon!" he gasped. "Who has brought her here?"

Poor Titian! It was not Ninon, but the child of Ninon, of whom he had fondly believed himself the father.

She had turned out wild, and died in the hospital of heart disease.

Titian took to his bed that night, never to leave it alive. He died delirious, and in his ravings seemed to believe that Ninon was waiting for him.

THE BASTINADO.—Russia rules with the knout, and Turkey with the stick. The term bastinado, from *bastus*, a stick, is confined exclusively, in modern acceptation, to the form of punishment adopted by the Turkish courts of justice—namely, beating the soles of the feet with sticks.

From this penalty certain classes are exempt—Emirs, or those belonging to the family of the Prophet; public functionaries, both civil and military; free citizens or private individuals holding landed property.

The punishment can, by the letter of the law, be inflicted only on the lower classes of society, slaves, Jews, Armenians, Greeks, and other tributary subjects of the empire. This exemption of certain classes is indeed not always respected, but the men in authority are not, as a general rule, subject, as they are in Persia, to the degrading punishment.

In Persia it was recently no infrequent thing for the Shah to have his Grand Vizier cudgelled in his presence, while the Vizier would do the like with the officers and ministers under him.

The punishment is thus inflicted. Two men support between them a strong pole, which is kept in a horizontal position; about the middle of the pole are some cords, with two running knots or nooses, through these the naked feet of the sufferer are forced, and then made tight, in such a manner that the soles are fairly exposed.

Sometimes the sufferer is thrown on his back; at other times he rests on his neck and shoulders, his feet being inverted, and the punishment is inflicted by a third man with a strong rough stick.

By the old law the number of strokes varied from three to thirty-nine; it was afterwards extended to seventy-five, and has since become optional; they dispense with the ceremony of keeping account of the blows, and lay it on till the feet of the sufferer are reduced to a complete jelly.

When the presiding officer is satisfied that sufficient punishment has been inflicted, he gives the word, the blows cease, the feet are cut loose, and the victim crawls away as he best can, and in the greatest agony. For many days afterwards he is unable to use his wounded feet, and is sometimes rendered a cripple for life.

A PUNCTUAL PENSIONER.—A gentleman one day noticed a hungry-looking dog prowling round his yard, and struck with the poor brute's famished appearance, he fetched a large bone and by no means a bare one, which he threw to the four-footed vagabond. It was exactly twelve o'clock when the bone was given and carried off.

The giver thought no more of the matter, but evidently the dog did, for on the following day at the same hour he made his appearance, with an expectant look about him which told that he hoped for a further contribution.

Amused at the effort to establish himself as an out-pensioner, and desirous of finding out whether the dog's arrival at this particular time was a mere chance, the gentleman gave him a second supply of food.

Punctual to time, the creature presented himself on the third, looking even more confident than before. He was duly fed, and for a great length of time this self-elected pensioner made his daily appearance at his patron's door with notable punctuality.

One is led to wonder whether the dog may have regulated his own movements by observing those of some individual in going to and from his work. And whether when the four-footed animal was a few minutes late it might be because the biped was unpunctual or his clock slow.

"Yes," remarked Mrs Parvenu, "I always said politics was regenerating. Nowadays all these high toned politicians are going around making champagne speeches, and when I was a girl, hard cider was good enough for the best of them."

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

It is asserted that at least 605,000,000 trees are now growing in this country, not seen before the beginning of the movement known as arbor, or tree-planting, day, originating about fifteen years ago. Twenty States now have a day set apart for planting trees, and the remainder of the commonwealths are likely to soon follow the example of their neighbors.

A place on earth has been found where taxes are unknown. It is a territory bordering on the northern line of Lincoln county, Me., called "Ribbert's Gore." It contains 334 acres of land and ten flourishing families. It is bounded by the lines of the counties—Knox, Lincoln, and Waldo—but is not claimed by either. The inhabitants do not maintain a municipal organization, and cannot vote for President, Governor, members of the Legislature or town officers.

Women are beginning to abolish the earring as one of their personal adornments, although it will take a long time to wholly banish this favorite but barbarous ornament. The recent aesthetic movement in dress, which introduced, amongst its absurdities, some truly sensible ideas, has much to do in educating women to a better standard of taste regarding personal adornments. The most exclusively fashionable women do not now wear ear-rings in the day-time, and only those with jewels of rare stones in the evening. Finally, they may be discarded altogether, and the money spent for diamonds in this direction be invested in brooches, pendants and bracelets.

New York boasts of being the first city in America to receive an order from a queen for a court dress. Queen Kapiolani expressed herself more than delighted with the artistic elegance of American costumes, and ordered a court dress in which to appear at the reception to be given her Hawaiian Majesty by Queen Victoria at Buckingham Palace. The services of a lady of high artistic taste were secured to aid the queen in her selections, and in giving the order her Majesty first consulted about the color. Azure blue was suggested, when the queen expressed herself very happily, saying, "my name in Hawaiian means 'Arch of Heaven,' and as azure blue and 'Arch of Heaven' are synonymous terms, the color would be most appropriate."

There is one man who is deserving of a place in the history of the discovery of natural gas. Dr Osterlent of Fredonia, O., knew of the presence of natural gas there fifty years ago. He was passing a stone quarry and detected its presence. He made a little cone of mud over a fissure and put a bucket over the orifice. In a few minutes he struck a match under the bucket. When the Doctor picked himself up in the adjoining cornfield the bucket was still in the air, sailing north in the direction of Toledo. It was through Dr. Osterlent's energy, fifty years later, that the first natural gas company in the town was organized. He had been laughed at and derided for half a century, and even after the flow had been struck in 1884, they say a good many of the people thought Old Nick had a hand in the thing somewhere.

In England, about two years ago, a maiden lady, of considerable wealth, was murdered and robbed in her summer residence. Her man-servant, a man named Lee, was suspected, arrested and convicted on circumstantial evidence, and sentenced to be hanged. Three efforts were made to hang Lee and each time the rope broke. The hangman was horrified, and the other officials declared his reluctance to proceed with the business. When the facts were reported to the Home Secretary, Lee's sentence was quietly commuted to imprisonment for life. Now for the climax. Recently a woman, who was Lee's fellow-servant, confessed on her dying bed that she killed her mistress. She declared that Lee had no connection with the affair, and stated facts strongly confirmatory of her confession. It is some satisfaction to know that the Government at once ordered the release of the man who had so narrowly escaped an infamous death, and now proposes to offer him a pecuniary compensation for his injuries.

A steam yacht is an expensive luxury. Jay Gould seldom cruises on the beautiful Atalanta, and more seldom has guests aboard, yet she costs him $6,000 a month. W. K. Vanderbilt has made one cruise in his new yacht, Alva—to the Bermudas—and has pointed others, and it is calculated that it will cost him at least $40,000 a month to maintain his steam pleasure craft. Wm. Astor keeps his steam yacht, Nourmahal, tied up most of the time, and consequently he gets off more cheaply—only up to $30,000 a month. The most extensive and most famous for its good cheer of all New York steam yachts is James Gordon Bennett's Namouna. For twelve months in the year he keeps her in commission and hardly a week passes when her cabin is not the scene of some lavish entertainment. Her entertainments were or less lavish, cost money, but how much Mr Bennett spends in that way will remain a mystery. It is only known that the sum total of actual expenses on the Namouna is $18,000 a year.

WHEN has a man four hands?—When he doubles his fists.

Our Young Folks.

ALL ROUND THE CLOCK.

BY R. COLERIDGE.

I WISH I were a girl again! I am sure I have a great deal to be thankful for as it is. But still—— 'When I was young—ah, woeful when——' These Christmas gatherings are very delightful even now; but just to think what they used to be—so fresh, so eager. How one enjoyed oneself. That evening, when he didn't dance with me—a very good thing that he didn't, too, considering how he turned out. But still—— Oh, to be young again, really young, for four-and-twenty hours. No cares, no responsibilities. Nothing to do but to enjoy other people's arrangements."

These sentiments were floating through the mind of a well-looking, well-dressed lady of a certain, or uncertain, age, as she sat by her bed-room fire one cold winter's night.

We will not particularly specify her present state of life or circumstances. Suffice it is to say, that her longing for her banished youth was not evoked because she had lost everything that made life bright to her; for, in her case, her outward circumstances had not changed so materially, as is often the case, and she had had blessings as well as trials all through her life.

Indeed, her thoughts had been directed to the past by the very fact that, after a considerable interval, she was now paying a visit to the same relations with whom, in the days of her regretted girlhood, she had enjoyed many of the pleasures on which she was now looking back so fondly.

"No," she said again to herself; "it is not only the outward life that one longs for, it is the fresh spring of youth within. Once more to be a girl before life's troubles began."

She was very tired, for she had been working hard all day for the amusement of the happy creatures who were now enjoying the bloom of their youth; and perhaps the fire and candle-light dazzled her a little, for a soft and luminous mist began to float before her eyes, and thence emerged a fairy—an orthodox, old-fashioned fairy, with full-floating skirt, spangled with silver stars—silver stars encircling her brow, and a silver star on the point of her long white wand. The lady looked at her without any surprise, but with a clear recollection how carefully lilac-stick wands required peeling, and how troublesome five-pointed stars used to be cut out.

"Gertrude," said the fairy, "I am the fairy of your youth. Your imagination conceived me in your early years; and, by a process of thought transference, I am now visible to your bodily senses."

"I am very glad to see you," said Gertrude; "I know you directly, though I haven't seen you for a long, long time."

"I thought you would be. You knew me well formerly; and, of course, you will suppose that, when I come to visit you at Christmas time, it is with the intention of granting your wishes."

"Fairies generally come for that purpose," said Gertrude; "but it doesn't always turn out as well as people sometimes expect."

"And you know a great deal about fairies, and yet I'm not sure that even now you don't see me sometimes, though you don't recognize me."

Gertrude looked puzzled, and the fairy continued—

"At any rate, now you have called me up, of course I will do something for you. And you shall be young again for four-and-twenty hours."

"What! Feel exactly as I did when I was eighteen?"

"Yes, if eighteen is the age you wish to select. I don't promise, mind you, to restore the outward circumstances of your youth; but to let you live for a day, with heart and mind, body and soul, as they were when you was eighteen."

"I can hardly believe it," said Gertrude.

"You have grown sceptical. Why, don't you see that it is as easy as possible in your star body?"

"Oh!" said Gertrude with a sound of enlightenment and gratification. "That will be very interesting. But——"

"Well?" said the fairy. "What is it?"

"I was thinking," said Gertrude, "that the experiment would lose much of its value if afterwards I was unable to compare——"

"Ah, I see you have learned the value of consideration and reflection. I promise you that, when the experiment is over, you shall have the opportunity of considering whether it is a success."

"However," said Gertrude, "it is not childhood that I long sometimes to go back to, but the freshness and spring of beginning life. And nothing had come yet to trouble me when I was eighteen."

"Very well," said the fairy. "You will go to bed as usual, and to-morrow morning you will wake up in your new-old condition. To-morrow night we will meet again to talk over the experiment."

As the fairy spoke she disappeared, and Gertrude hastily undressed herself, determined not to close an eye all night, lest she should lose the beginning of the marvellous change.

She fell asleep the moment her head was on the pillow.

* * * * * *

"Miss Gertrude! Miss Gertrude! Are you awake, Miss? It only wants half an hour to prayers, Miss, and it is quite time to get up."

Gertrude was aroused from an extreme and abnormal condition of sleeplessness by this remark from the highly respectable head housemaid, who was pulling up her blinds with great vigor.

"And, Miss Gertrude," the maid continued, "I have brushed your skirt as well as I can, but, if you will walk in such muddy p——, it is almost more than I can manage."

Gertrude, still half asleep, replied by a grunt, which was intended to be grateful and ejaculatory; but as the double consciousness of which the fairy had spoken still clung to her, she had a sense of missing something, probably the cup of tea to which she was accustomed in cold weather. She sat up and rubbed her eyes. What was the matter with her fingers? Had the twinges of rheumatism, to which she was subject, got worse in the night?

She jumped out of bed with a bounce on to the floor, and began to pull on her stockings.

"Oh, dear, oh, dear! how bad my chilblains are to-day!" she cried, as stings, and aches, and thrills, once too familiar, waked her to the certain consciousness that she was the girl Gertrude again.

She made one rush to the looking glass. Yes; there was the round, rosy, sonsy face, with thick, unmanageable hair all over her shoulders, parting lips, and bright, honest eyes.

This was the girl-face with no story printed on it at all, no fine lines of thought or subtle sweetness come from many and various feelings, all simple and in the rough.

But how Gertrude would have welcomed that honest face again, if she could have seen it yesterday in dream or vision. Now, as she stared into the glass, all sense of strangeness left her.

She looked at herself discontentedly, for, in truth, she had not much beauty to boast of. Gertrude had never been a pretty girl, but she admired beauty, and would have liked to possess it.

She did not feel at all surprised to find herself, not in the best spare room, where she had gone to sleep, but in a little fireless attic, into which the extra young cousin had been stowed.

But she had omitted to tack in clean frilling the night before to her dress, and it was so hard to pin it in with cold, stiff fingers.

She had a cold in her head, too, which did not in the least make her feel less ready for the dance that night; only it was horribly unbecoming, and spoilt her one beauty, her pink-and-white skin.

She was late, of course, and flew downstairs at full speed, then lingered in the hall, because it was so awful to encounter a room full of strangers—she was extremely shy. However, the servant appeared with hot toast, and she followed in his train.

"Late again, Gertie, Gertie," said her aunt.

"Oh, for shame, 'Gatty,'" said a boy cousin, rather loudly.

"I wish he would not call me 'Gatty.' I know I hate it," she whispered, as she sat down by his side.

"Gertrude and Margaret call each other Trudchen and Gretchen in their letters," cried out a little girl.

And there was a general laugh, while a benevolent aunt looked kindly and critically at Gertrude's blushing countenance, and remarked to the general company—

"Little Gertie is very like what her Aunt Gertrude used to be."

"Don't you flatter yourself, Gertie. You'll never be as fine a woman as your aunt."

"Aunt Gertrude is such an industrious person; she has so much conversation and such agreeable manners," said the mistress of the house, impressively. "What a pity she had to go home to-day."

"How the world degenerates," said Gertrude, rather pretty [illegible] "we are not as we used to be in perfection."

Gertrude's aunt did not reprove her "before people," but she turned the conversation, and Gertrude's ears—nay, her fingers—became scarlet—purple with vexation.

But consolation came. When breakfast was over, she and Gretchen flew at each other, to continue, in a remote corner of the school-room, the construction of a romance for which Gretchen was chiefly responsible, but which was the joy of her Trudchen's life.

Oh, that romance, and that hero! The best ultramarine was not so blue as his eyes: poetry contained nothing so sublime as his sentiments, and history little, so tragic as his fate.

But cousin Adela, twenty-one and fond of society, had called him a sentimental prig. What cutting criticism could be more cruel?

"I shouldn't have minded it she had said he was unnaturally stoical," said the unhappy authoress; "but sentimental—I don't think I can go on."

"Adela is extremely shallow," said Gertrude. "It's odd how shallow most people are."

Just then—"Girls, girls, come along, the pond will bear!" resounded through the house. Away went the hero, and out flew the younger ladies.

Skate, skate: who minded the ice and the rough, or anyone? But Gertrude was only a beginner, and not a very graceful one, and lofty as her mind might be, there was a little pang when the extremely shallow Adela paired with each gentleman in turn.

Their eyes were not exceptionally blue, their sentiments were not unusual; but Gertrude would have liked to feel that they liked her, and was grateful to the schoolboy cousin for saying, "Come along, Gatty, let's have a turn," though he told her she was jolly heavy.

Home to lunch, and a long conversation on politics and social science among the elders, which Gertrude's deep mind did not take in, and then her aunt's desire that they should all stay in and rest—no more skating for her Gertrude, with her cold, especially.

Protests were vain: the young ladies were consigned to the drawing-room, to fancy work and to their aunts.

Oh, the length and blank of that afternoon! How dull Gertrude was; what a loss of life to be neither skating on the pond nor hidden up in the school-room with the hero, and not to dare to open a book.

Moreover, Gretchen was in sore trouble. She had more enterprise and power than Gertrude, and had lately become in the intervals of the hero, furiously parochial. And now she was sulky and half crying because she was not allowed, when the house was full of company, and they were going out in the evening, to go and take a class two miles off at the school.

"Out of the question, Maggie," said her mother, "for you or Gertie either."

And both the girls thought that the future of humanity and their own characters were sacrificed to a heartless conventionality. When at last they escaped from the drawing-room, they sighed to each other over the lost freedom of childhood.

"What fun it was," said Gertrude, "when we were young and could run about the house and never mind company. Life does get duller."

Perhaps in the evening she did not think so, though the dance was "small and early," and though her white shoes were very tight, and her success variable.

She did not want to go when her aunt was ready, though she had endured the pang of being partnerless for three dances, though her chilblains were very bad, and though Gretchen, who hated dancing, had not enjoyed herself.

Home and to bed, and to sleep in a minute.

* * * * * *

Gertrude awoke and started up with a confused sense of she knew not what. Her head seemed to whirl far over her, there surged a throng of people, thoughts, ideas, events, feelings, loves; her mind seemed at once overpoweringly full.

Half remembering, half dreaming, she again rushed up—to the looking-glass. There, in the light of gas and fire, she saw the stately black gown, the pretty lace cap, and the face both faded and fined down, that had replaced that of the young Gertrude. There was nothing greatly amiss in the face, and no cause for anxiety in the fit of the gown.

Gertrude turned around, and there stood the silver-starred fairy.

"Well, Gertrude," she said.

Gertrude sat down again by the fire, and all the past day came clearly before her as in a vision.

"How did you like it?" said the fairy.

A long silence. The tears gathered in Gertrude's eyes.

"It was very nice to hear them say 'Gatty,'" she said, with a long sigh, and then another silence.

"And then—at that time—one thought there might have been—one might have had—one did hope to be——" And she cried a little more.

The fairy said nothing, but let her thoughts come one by one.

"But what an immense quantity after all there is now, that one never thought of," she said more cheerfully. "After all, it was rather stupid—as it really was——. No, I couldn't give up so many friends—so many interests and thoughts. After all, experience is very interesting.

"Do you want to go back?" said the fairy.

"N-o—No!" said Gertrude. "There were a great many bothers—and chilblains—and one never had one's own way. I think I had a nice day the day before—such interesting letters, and one does feel that one is of some use in that mission, and I quite enjoyed my afternoon with old Aunt Charlotte and her long stories, and helping the children to get up their play. How pretty little Maggie looked! I don't think I enjoyed the ball more either, than I did my aunt's dinner party. I like good conversation.'

'And you talk remarkably well," said the fairy.

"Much better than I danced," said Gertrude, with candor. "No, I don't think things were much nicer in themselves—at least for me. But, oh, there was the future, all so dim and shiny."

"Yes," said the fairy, "the future."

"Fairy," said Gertrude, humbly, after a long pause, "I think, after all, I have a much longer future in my mind now. But it doesn't always shine."

The fairy bent her head and said nothing.

"But when it does——" said Gertrude. And she seemed to see, not the fairy's silver stars, but the far-off stars of heaven.

"I thought," said Gertrude, whose confused mind wandered from one thing to another, "I thought I might, perhaps, have seen old Smudge." Her eyes fell on a hairy mass at her feet. "But Dandy would have been very jealous if I had."

Then she was conscious of vague puzzles in her mind. Had she and Gertrude really lived again, or inhabited the bodies of their [illegible] nieces? Had there been a day or a dream?

"The conditions of astral existence," said the fairy, "are inexplicable—in fact, unconditional."

And Gertrude yielded the point with a sigh. Presently she remarked again:—

"After all, I am not sure that it was so very different. I don't think I felt quite as sure of my present self as I supposed I should. Yesterday—no, the day before—well, some time lately—Margaret showed me that part review that called her newest hero a 'ladies' hero.' Only she laughed, and said she had made up her mind to it from that quarter. And she does not feel herself hampered by her vicar's narrow-minded views on amusements for the lower classes. But she says she knows that a drag is useful. And a talk with her was delightful as ever, though I don't think I care quite as much about her G. F. S. girls as I did about those first school-children. No, on the whole, I think life has widened, and if it has saddened it has brightened, too, for her and for me. And Adela, she had an ideal young-ladyhood, and now she has an anxious life. But what would she do without those nine children? What little geese we were to think her shallow! No, on the whole, there are ups and downs all one's life through, but it is not so very different. Amusements are still amusing, and one thought one had a past then, and there's a future now, if one can remember it."

"I told you," said the fairy, "that you still saw me sometimes without knowing it."

Gertrude looked, and the Christmas fairy seemed to move and float through all sorts of forms and images, "angel, and knight, and fairy." Romance indeed, but in many shapes. And Gertrude knew the influence that had touched and brightened the long years of her life under a thousand aspects. Yes, she saw the fairy still sometimes. She started up and held out her hands, a sudden chill and fear running through her.

"Yes, now," she said; "but when one gets older still? Middle life, yes; but what of old age?"

The fairy looked at her again. Tarletan and stars had vanished; all the brilliant shapes that had succeeded them had mingled and faded. But the fairy's face grew fair and clear, and she gazed on with steadfast, unlooking eyes, till Gertrude knew that Fancy, Romance, Hope and Imagination would never die if they found their right outcome and explanation—Faith and Love.

CRYING BABIES.—We do not suppose that any of our readers who live within two hundred yards of a house in which there is a young child will require us to swear to the fact that babies cry. It is positively certain that they do cry, but why they cry has always been an unfathomed mystery, although all manner of conjectures have been made.

When the little cherubs screw up their faces into a knot, preparatory to setting up a howl, and convulsively work their legs, after the manner of an insane jumping jack, the general impression is that colic is furnishing the motive power.

On other occasions, the person of the infant is searched for a concealed weapon in the shape of a pin. Our own opinion, founded on a great deal of actual experience, is that babies cry because they have lungs. It must be admitted that if they had no lungs their vocal solos would not have quite as much compass.

What is really needed is the discovery of a process whereby the lungs of an infant can be removed without danger, only to be replaced when the infant has arrived at an age when it can comprehend the enormity of the crime of keeping people awake at night by prolonged shrieks.

It is a popular impression that a baby cries just to hear itself cry, as it seems to have no other object; but this is knocked on the head by a German doctor, who, having given the matter his closest attention, insists that until they are several months old all infants are deaf.

If this be really a fact, it is distressing to think of the amount of "wooley-wooley" talk that has been squandered on infants since the first was born. Hereafter, when fond parents want to converse with the newly-arrived addition, it will have to be through an ear-trumpet, since nature has neglected to supply infants with them at their birth. At any rate, the old idea that babies cry just to hear themselves cry is pretty effectually exploded.

HIS MOTHER'S WORK.—"My mother gets me up, builds the fire, gets my breakfast and sends me off," said a bright youth.

"What then?" said the reporter.

"Then she gets my father up and gets his breakfast and sends him off, then gets the other children their breakfast and sends them to school, and then she and the baby have their breakfast."

"How old is the baby?"

"O, she is most two, but she can walk and talk as well as any of us."

"Are you well paid?"

"I get $2 a week; father gets $— a day."

"How much does your mother get?"

With a bewildered look the boy said: "Mother! why she don't work for anybody."

"I thought you said she worked for all of you?"

"O yes, she does; but there ain't no money in it."

DELIBERATE workers are those who accomplish the most work in a given time, and are less tired at the end of the day than many who have not accomplished half as much. The hurried worker has often to do his work twice over, and even then it is seldom done in the best manner, either as to neatness or durability.

MRS. B.—"Are you not going to celebrate your wooden wedding?" Mrs. C.—"No, my first wedding was a wooden one." Mrs. B.—"Oh, it could not be, you know." Mrs. C.—"It was. I married a blockhead."

MISEREMUS.

BY LORIS.

The shadows lengthen and the sunlight dies
In hectic glow above the waving trees,
Its parting hymn breathed forth in lullabys
By the soft rustling of the evening breeze.

See you you ivied wall, whose somure gray
Recks little of the onward march of Time,
Bearings as yet no traces of decay
To mar the beauty of each curved line.

Above, the storied western window stands
(Painted by one now numbering with the dead)—
Scenes of the Blessed Life in holy lands,
And one sad picture of a thorn-crowned Head.

Look how the rosy light on that bright pane
Reflects a radiance dazzling to behold,
Falling aslant a headstone, where I fain
Would pause, to read the history thereon told.

Only one word marks out that lonely spot—
Only one word, with deepest sadness fraught:
"Miseremus"—most wretched! Pass it not,
But follow on the saddened train of thought.

Think on and pity this poor soul, whose life
Was all so full of woe and deep unrest,
That peaceful death, ending its early strife,
Could bring with him no glorious vision blest.

Leave not the lonely grave without one prayer
For all the sorrow-laden and the lone:
Pray that for them a silver lining fair
May chase the clouds which veil the great unknown.

The shadows deepen, twilight now draws nigh:
No sunset frames the west in ruby rod;
The breeze dies softly in a farewell sigh,
And rest and peace are with the weary dead.

THE WORLD'S SYMBOLS.

Everything that can be seen may be looked on as a symbol of something in the unseen and mental world. The material represents the spiritual, and the world of nature corresponds in a curious way to the world of thought. Birds and beasts, trees and flowers, the fruitful earth and the restless ocean, all prove suggestive.

Take the birds that flit from tree to tree—the emblems of joy and freedom. The lark is the symbol of cheerfulness, as anyone would suppose who had listened to the music of his little instrumental throat.

"Are you a singing-master?" says a girl to a lark, in an old fairy tale.

"Not I," says the lark. "I sing out of pure happiness."

The dove is a symbol of innocence, the swan of grace, the eagle of majesty, the hawk of penetration, and hen of maternal love. In the robin redbreast we see that confidence which begets confidence, which is not the only pleasant observation to be made on "the pious bird with the scarlet breast" as he twitters away trying to cheer the cold scenery of winter, and rejoice the heart of man.

The peacock occupies a place in Christian art as a symbol of the resurrection, owing to the fabled incorruptibility of its flesh. In ordinary life, however, it is an emblem of pride. The peacock and the turkey are called Romany "lady-birds," because, as a gipsy once explained the matter, "they spread out their clothes, hold up their heads, look fine, and walk proud."

In the lamb—to leave speaking of the feathered race—we have a type of innocence. This gentle creature is introduced in Christian art as an emblem of the Redeemer, "the Lamb of God."

The cat is a symbol of liberty, which is a natural distinction, for no other animal has such a hatred of constraint. Puss, however, has a bad side to her character, and this occasions her being frequently used to represent slyness and deceit. For the dog also one may adopt either a good or a bad symbolism. He may be regarded either as the wise and faithful friend of man, or as a snappish cur of decidedly objectionable habits. There are good men and bad, and so with dogs.

The hare is a symbol of timidity; the horse, of speed and grace; the camel, of patience; the elephant, of sagacity; the lion, of noble courage; and the serpent, of wisdom.

Amongst insects the ant represents frugality and forethought; the common fly, feebleness and insignificance; the bee, industry; and the butterfly, thoughtless enjoyment.

The symbolism of living creatures, as we have noticed in the case of the dog and cat, is not always complimentary. In a wasp we see many a disagreeable girl, with a vixenish temper and an irritating tongue; sharks are like some men, and women, too; hogs are like others; so are jackdaws and magpies. Foxes stand for cunning people; asses and geese, for the stupid; bears, for the ill-mannered; and snails, for the slow. The crocodile supplies an image of hypocrisy, to which reference is made in the phrase, "crocodile's tears." It was a fiction of old travellers that crocodiles sighed as if in deep distress to allure kindhearted people to destruction, and even shed tears over those whom they devoured.

Turning now to the world of vegetable life, we find almost every plant and tree surrounded by a halo of human thought. In the leaves of the forest we may read the fate of all the dwellers upon earth. "We all do fade as a leaf." So said Isaiah.

The oak, "the king of forests all," is an emblem of strength and durability. The evergreen box, holly, and ivy symbolise the resurrection—at least, they are so used in Christian art. The olive stands for peace, and the palm for victory. The dismal yew is commonly regarded as a symbol of death; but, in all likelihood, it was first planted in churchyards as an emblem of immortality. In the East the yew appears to be planted beside graves as a type of unfading virtues and perennial remembrance.

Flowers lend themselves readily to symbolism, though much of the so-called language of flowers is based on neither rhyme nor reason. The rose, the queen of flowers, is the symbol of silence, an emblem alluded to in the old phrase, "Under the rose," meaning that what is said is not to go any farther. How this connection originated has been discussed often enough, but without any satisfactory conclusion having been arrived at. The rose is a flower specially devoted to religion, and, as emblems of the Virgin Mary, white and red roses have been used for ages.

The lily represents purity and innocence. Gabriel, in pictures of the Annunciation, is sometimes shown bearing a lily branch, whilst a vase holding a lily stands before the Virgin, who is kneeling in prayer. As a token of purity it was also frequently placed by artists of old in the hands of female saints.

The violet as a symbol of modesty, the forget-me-not of remembrance, not to speak of a hundred other examples, will occur to everyone. The loveliness of flowers has caused them, as a rule, to be chosen as representatives only of what is amiable and good. Rocks represent solid facts, and stones may be taken as types of hard, cold characters, of whom there are many about.

These examples must suffice. Enough have perhaps been given to show the reader how doubly interesting everything becomes when linked with thought. From the dust of the wayside to the stars of the midnight sky, everything has a meaning as well as a use, and what that meaning is we should do our best to discover.

Grains of Gold.

We are martyrs to our own faults.

He who gives fair words feeds you with an empty spoon.

The gauge which we apply to things is the measure of our own minds.

We have arrived at intellectual blindness when we only see what we wish to see.

The irresolute seize with eagerness all overtures which show them two roads.

He is the richest man who knows how to use the keys which Life puts into his hands.

It is easier to be generous than just. Men are sometimes bountiful who are not honest.

A great misfortune suffices to clothe even the humblest of God's creatures with grandeur.

Genius is only entitled to respect when it promotes the peace and improves the happiness of mankind.

The busybody labors without thanks, talks without credit, lives without love, and dies without tears.

There is no man who is not better or worse to-day by means of what he thought, designed or did yesterday.

We arraign society if it do not give us besides earth and fire and water, opportunity, love, reverence and objects of veneration.

The most ignorant have knowledge enough to discover the faults of others; the most clear-sighted are blind to their own.

The word of God will stand a thousand readings, and he who has gone over it most frequently is the surest at finding new wonders there.

Water that flows from a spring does not freeze in the coldest winter. And those sentiments of true friendship which flow from the heart cannot be frozen by adversity.

Femininities.

I know there's a cross about Norah's blue eye,
But that fact me love cannot smother,
For her eyes are so pretty! No wonder they try
To be gazin' 'round into each other.

In kitchen-French "miroton" means cold meat warmed in various ways and dished in circular form.

A small rustic branch twined with forget-me-nots makes a pretty pin.

Before the wedding—Wooed and won. Five years after—Wooden one.

Great good is often unaccomplished, merely because it is not attempted.

A fern leaf, covered with a dew of clustered diamonds, is one of the most graceful of pins.

He who Mrs. to take a kiss,
Has Mr. thing he should not Miss.

In a recent breach of promise suit it appeared that the plaintiff had what she called an "ice-cream young man."

A very popular scarf or bonnet pin is the horseshoe set with two rows of gems, one of rubies or sapphires, the other of diamonds.

Many a man has owed as much of his fame and success to his wife's quiet and silent aid as he has owed to his own native power.

A club for young ladies is a startling idea. He is a bold man who has projected it, and the ladies will be bolder who become members.

Keep yourselves in some useful employment; for idleness is the nursery of vain and sinful thoughts, which corrupt the mind and disorder the life.

A Camden young man sent a note to his girl asking at what time he should call, and received in return the following: "Dear Jos—Comeafpastsix."

The true lady displays the same manners in her toilet room as in her parlor, and the same courtesy towards her servants as towards her guests.

Spider-leg penmanship is obsolete, and the fashion is to be the copper-plate style, just as it is done on the head of a page in school writing books.

Woman is charged with deception about her age, but the charge is unjust. When a woman says she is thirty years old, you may depend upon it that she is.

A woman lecturer says woman's sphere is bound north by her husband, on the east by her baby, on the south by her mother-in-law, and on the west by a maiden aunt.

"A Disappointed Wife" is the name of a new book. She probably found a letter addressed to her husband in his pocket, and it turned out to be only a bill from the milliner's.

There is a kind of close relationship between all those who are suffering from some sorrow or other. If we are in mourning, we feel somehow or other drawn to every black dress we meet.

Ink stain may be removed from white goods by saturating the spot with water and then covering with pounded salts of lemon. Put in the sun for five minutes, wash with soap and rinse.

Wife: "Can you let me have a little change, dear?" Husband, "How much do you want?" "Twenty cents for car fare?" "Will that be enough?" "Oh, yes; I am only going shopping."

Man is continually saying to woman, "Why are you not more wise?" Woman is constantly saying to man, "Why are you not more loving?" Unless each is both wise and loving, there can be no real growth.

The first statue ever erected to a woman in the United States has just been unveiled at New Orleans. It is to Margaret Haughery, who devoted her great wealth, earned by carrying on an extensive bakery, to charities, impartially dispensed.

The atmosphere of a household has everything to do with the development of its inmates, and one can hardly expect to find soft-mannered, delicately sensitive young people brought up under the influence of irascible or bickering or choleric parents.

The care of her family is her whole delight; to that alone she applieth her study; and elegance with frugality is seen in her home. The prudence of her management is an honor to her husband, and he heareth her praise with silent delight. Such is a good wife.

A velvet dog collar with a padlock in gold, and jeweled, is one of the latest freaks of fashion for young ladies; the velvet band is about an inch and a half wide, and is worn close around the throat; the padlock is in the form of a pendant, and is hung on the velvet in front.

Georgiana: "John Henry, wake up! There's someone in the house! Oh, what shall we do?" John Henry: "Hush-sh-sh! I hear him! He's rummaging in the pantry now. Keep perfectly quiet, and he may eat some of that pie you made yesterday. Then we'll have him!"

They were talking of the club. She does not like the club, because her husband is too fond of it. To say she detested the club is putting it too mildly. "Yes," somebody said, "the club is as near to being burned out as possible." "The club burned! Great heavens, my husband would have been homeless."

First play actress, popular: "You'll come to my benefit, dear, next week? I play 'Ophelia.' It's the part in which I made my first appearance, you know." Second play actress, less popular: "Oh, of course, yes! I can remember my father taking me to see you in it, though I was a mere schoolgirl at the time, and didn't understand much about it."

Here is what General Gordon, in his "Reflections in Palestine," says of the tongue, and specially of the tongue of woman: "The tongue is glib, serpent-like, and it is odd that women have it in such perfection, which none have ever disputed. It is their defense. The woman ate first, and the tongue is her particular forte. Yet when women speak good, how well they speak it out! They are in this point the salt of the earth."

Masculinities.

Handshaking is going out of style in this country.

Duty: An obligation that rests entirely upon one's neighbor.

Never cry mouse when you see a lady climbing over a fence or getting into a wagon.

We remain young so long as we can learn, can adopt new habits, and can bear contradiction.

Advice: A superfluous article which everybody is eager to give away, but no one cares to receive.

If, in proportion to size, a man could yell as loud as a baby, there would be no telephones needed.

Don't be fussy and demonstrative in trying to be polite, for then you show that you are not well bred.

Hereditary gout is a most unjust disease. The father has had all the fun and the son catches most of the pain.

An impartial spirit will admire goodness or greatness wherever he meets it, and whether it makes for or against him.

Of no use are the men who study to do exactly as was done before, who can never understand that to-day is a new day.

As yet it is undetermined which is the worse—"the man who can sing and won't, or the man who can't sing and will."

Knitting black silk stockings is the latest craze among the ladies. This comes dangerously near to doing something useful.

A tramp succeeded in making an upholstered pew in St. Peter's Church, N. Y., his bed every night for two weeks before he was caught at it.

It is said that elopements are becoming so frequent in New Jersey that business men now take their wives with them to their stores and offices.

Eat only such things as agree with you, and not too much at a time. By heeding the warning of your stomach many a doctor's bill, and even undertaker's, too, may be avoided.

The young man who has a seat in the horse car between two pretty girls always smiles complacently when the conductor calls: "Move up, please! room for one more on this side."

A well-to-do German walked into the rooms of the Overseer of the Poor at Buffalo the other day and gave the official $5, the price with interest of a ton of coal received by him when he was in poor circumstances in 1877.

It is very easy to start false reports. Just because a woman, while buying a broom, wanted one with a heavy and strong handle, it was reported by all the neighbors that she was in the habit of beating her husband.

In Portugal the rank of a peer is dependent, among other things, upon his having obtained an academical degree. In Spain high appointments in the army and navy qualify the holders of them to a place in the senate.

An attache of a Chicago circus went to sleep on top of the lion's cage one night recently, and in his sleep rolled over, leaving one of his legs hanging over the side. The lion struck the young man's foot with one of his claws and nearly tore it off.

Here is a hint which may prove useful to persons afflicted with the impediment of stammering. If the sufferer will always fill his lungs by a strong inhalation before he begins to speak, he may very readily cure the most obstinate case of stammering.

A medical magazine devotes a page to "How to determine when a man is dead." The conclusions arrived at are very satisfactory, but the matter could have been disposed of by simply stating that when a man refuses a drink or an office he is pretty well gone.

The chief justice of Connecticut, who dined the other day with the Board of Pardons of that State at the penitentiary, experienced a sudden failure of appetite upon learning that the woman who served at the table was also serving a life sentence for poisoning her husband.

Men are strange creatures. They will waste an hour hunting for a collar-button instead of having an extra supply and letting their wives find the missing one. You never see a woman look for the pin she drops. Her husband finds it when he is walking about with bare feet.

On the husband, as being the higher power, lies the chief responsibility for securing domestic happiness. This will not be attained by selfish requirements from others. On the contrary, the husband must use consideration and self-denial, and expend time and money for this purpose.

Plumb, who drinks at least four bottles of ale a day: "Hey? What? Can't get along with the money I allow you for housekeeping?" Mrs. Plumb, mother of five small Plumbs: "No, I can't. I've run short a dollar each of the last three weeks." Plumb: "Well, if that's the case, you'd better stop taking milk. I never use it."

The following notice is nailed on the chief dressing-room door of a theatre not far from Chicago: "In case of fire do not forget to catch the leading lady by the arm, and not by her hair, to save her. The hair belongs to the properties of the theatre, and is covered by insurance. The leading lady is not."

Mr. Blake, to Mrs. Flint: "And so you have moved since I saw you last. And how do you like your new location?" Mrs. Flint: "Oh, very much better than the old one. We are on an avenue that leads directly to the cemetery, and almost all the funerals pass our door, which makes it extremely pleasant."

In Japan, as in America, the gentle sex monopolize most of the attention of society, while their unfortunate brothers are left to struggle for themselves. This discrimination begins early in life, but it is the Japanese custom to give baby girls the names of delicate and lovely plants or flowers, while the boys are simply numbered, and are known as First-boy, Second-boy, and so on.

Recent Book Issues.

"Bellona's Husband" is a strange piece of story-making that will be likely to amuse most readers. It embodies some sarcastic points about modern investments, inventions, future possibilities, love matters, etc. There is a trip to the planet Mars by means of an ethereal disc, which results in portraying social and general life on that star in a most fanciful and agreeable style. Price, 25 cents. Lippincott & Co.

"The Captain of the Janizaries," by Dr. James M. Ludlow, is one of the picturesque historical romances whose picturesqueness relieves the history to such an extent that the well-blended elements leave the general impression merely of romance. The story is stirring, vivid and impressive, less as a whole whose plot is ingenious, than as a collection of episodes, each brilliantly written and so suggestive as to interest the reader apart from the mere story. The author has a rare command of language, and the book would be worth reading if only for the series of striking pictures it presents. It is a tale of "local color," and we have so few really picturesque writers, that the book might be welcomed even without its contribution to historical information. Funk & Wagnalls, publishers, New York. Price, $1.50.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

Bailey, Banks & Biddle's *Connoisseur*, illustrated quarterly, ending June, is just out. In its etching, engravings, and literary articles on high art subjects, it more than maintains the excellent promise of its predecessors. Price, fifty cents per year.

The Quiver, for July, opens with an interesting account, illustrated, of Miss Leigh's "Home for English and American Girls," 77 Wagram avenue, Paris." By way of stories we have in this number the continuation of the serials, "My Brother Basil," and "By the Waters of Babylon," and "The Story of an Old Bible," all of them illustrated. Among other articles is a description of "The Gordon Boys at Home," being an account of the Institute established in England in memory of the late General Gordon. Theology, as usual, holds an important place, and poetry and anecdote make up a representative number. $1.50 a year. Cassell & Co., publishers, New York.

The frontispiece of the *Magazine of Art* for July, is a capital reproduction of Detaille's "In Time of Peace." The opening article, "Verona Pa Degua," which has an architectural interest, is followed by a paper on fascinating Angelica Kauffman. This paper is illustrated with reproductions in sanguine of several of "Miss Angel's" best known pictures. Korean ware is given a prominent place, and is described by pen and pencil. Current art is discussed at length, and we are given some excellent wood engravings. Kugler's Italian Schools of Painting is reviewed, and there is a spirited description of a ride to Dorking by coach. The notes on art are full and interesting, and the number is altogether a capital one. Cassell & Co., New York. $3.50 a year.

THE TRUE AND FALSE.—

Lowliness is young ambition's ladder,
Whereto the climber upwards turns his face;
But when he once attains the upmost round,
He then unto the ladder turns his back,
Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees
By which he did ascend.

There is a secret ambition burning in every one's breast to better his condition, raise himself to power, wealth or fame. But how few arrive at these points by their own energy, character or abilities. And when such men get elevated, and favored by the encouragement and help of others, they become indifferent to their benefactors, and show no feeling of gratitude or appreciation for their assistance and support. An honorable, upright, and conscientious man never forgets favors, nor those who have favored him, but is ever zealous and ardent to repay in some way the obligations he feels are binding upon him by duty and principle. Unscrupulous and sordid men have no moral impulses or convictions; the sensibilities are blunted, they have no warm or generous sympathies and emotions, no tender feeling to awaken and keep alive the purity of friendship and affection. All good and noble thoughts and intentions are driven from their hearts by the chilling blasts of selfishness and neglect. Few can bear prosperity with composure and grace. It turns the brain of many men, intoxicates them with conceit and pride, and makes them play such fantastic tricks before high Heaven as make the angels weep.

W. G. L.

THE "WHISTLING-TREE."—In Nubia, Africa, there are groves of acacia extending over one hundred miles square. The most conspicuous species is one whose Arabic name is "soffar," meaning flute or pipe. From the larvæ of insects which have worked their way to the inside, their ivory-white shoots are often distorted in form and swollen out at their base into a globular bladder-like gall about one inch in diameter. After the insect has emerged from a circular hole, this thorn-like shoot becomes a sort of musical instrument, upon which the wind as it plays produces the regular sound of a flute. On this account the natives of the Soudan name the acacia the "whistling tree."

MAKE yourself a sheep and the wolves will eat you, is an Italian proverb.

A Brave Girl.

BY E. M. K.

I FIRST saw Rachel, as she came bounding over the stony brook, on a hill-side, one summer afternoon. She was so intent on some purpose that she nearly stumbled against me before being aware of my presence.

Stopping suddenly, as she saw me, she would have retreated, but I spoke to her, asking her to sit by me.

"I won't do that," she said; "I know better. You will laugh at my old clothes. You grand folks don't like poor folks, I know."

She stood irresolute as she answered me. So I again asked her to sit down, making room on the knoll by my side.

"What is your name, my little girl?" I asked.

"Rachel Brown, but they call me Ray."

"Well, Rachel, why do you come out here all alone?"

"What do you come out here for?" she asked bluntly.

"The woods are full of flowers and birds, and the little brook sings musically as it dashes on over the rocks, and plunges down into the ravine, on its way to the ocean. I like to come here and sit under these grand old trees, and enjoy it all," I said, watching the effect of my words upon her.

"Well, I didn't come here for that sort of thing," she said, a little abashed. "I came to see the train come home with the school excursion. I wish something would happen, I do!"

"Why, Rachel, do you know what your wish means?"

"Well, I wish something would happen to me, then, for I don't have any pleasure. At home, old Mrs. Brown scolds me, and sometimes beats and starves me, too, and at school they pick on me, and call me names. I do wish something would happen."

"Isn't Mrs. Brown your mother?"

"No, she ain't. She took me, she says, when my mother died, and my father went abroad, and she don't where he is. So she makes me work to earn my livin', and I don't know what I want to live for, I am sure."

"Will you tell me your father's name, Rachel, and perhaps I can find out where he is."

Ray looked up with a hungry gleam of hope in her deep blue eyes, that betrayed an imprisoned spirit yearning for release. I resolved to do my best for her, and save her from the wretched life with old Mrs. Brown.

"I don't know what his name is," she went on. "I think it is Jim Adams. If I should ask her she wouldn't tell me. But she calls him Jim, and I know my name is Adams, 'cause I've books that have my own name, Rachel Adams, in 'em, I had 'em 'fore my mother died, and that's all I know."

"Well, Rachel, keep on going to school, and do the best you can at home for Mrs. Brown, and I will see what can be done for you."

"That's just what I sha'n't do, miss. I've made up my mind this morning not to go to school, but I do want to learn dreadful."

This last was said with a great sob—that the girl was evidently ashamed of, for she burst into an immoderate laugh, while real tears were on her eyelashes. She was about to spring away, but I retained her.

"Why do you resolve to leave school, Rachel?"

"Because they treat me worse than Mrs. Brown; for they hain't no right to call me names, and tell lies about me to cover their own doings. They put mice in the mistress's bonnet, and burdocks on her shawl, or nettles in her gloves, and then they make believe that I did it."

Ray actually looked the scorn she felt. I could see she had a mind far above her surroundings, but I hardly knew what to say to her. She began again to give reasons for leaving school—

"They've all gone to a picnic to-day, and not one on 'em asked me to go, teacher nor nobody. I heard one on 'em say, 'I suppose that scarecrow thinks she is going,' and I come now to see 'em come back. It ain't their school more than mine, and they didn't buy their clothes more than I did mine. It's only they have fathers and I hain't."

Her face now glowed with passion. We sat in silence a short time, when suddenly Rachel gave a cry and sprang up. I heard the sound also, and looking up the hill we saw a mass of rocks, shrubs, earth, and twisted roots crashing on, on; then with a reverberating echo, it fell over a cliff, and was out of our sight.

We both started to see where it fell; but the little friendless waif was out of sight before I reached the spot. I gazed horror-struck, for at the foot of the hill lay a railway track, like a thread, nearly filling the space between the brook and the precipice over which the debris had fallen.

The train was now due. Indeed, at this moment I could hear its shrill whistle far away at a crossing, advancing with its precious freight to swift destruction.

I stood paralyzed. But Rachel was running like a deer, with a cry that echoed among the hills, as if fierce spirits were calling to each other.

On she went, until the engine-driver saw her, and began to slacken the speed by reversed engine and "brakes down." Still it seemed to me that she was running into the jaws of death.

When she saw the signal of success, she turned and ran back, but in her bewilderment kept on the track.

At length the train stopped only a few feet from the girl.

As the people crowded from the train, and learned their escape from a fearful fate, they were eager to know who had served them. But the school-girls saw Rachel, and at once in her daring way she had risked her life to save the train.

They were ashamed and silent as they passed by her.

A purse was made up for her by the passengers, but she darted away, refusing the gift with characteristic scorn.

Those who attempted to thank her, saw her put her fingers in her ears, and when at length she fell down from exhaustion, she obstinately refused assistance.

"I hope they'll stop calling me names," she confided to me as I waited by her till she could go home.

From that day she was treated more kindly in school. Under the influence of love, she developed into a modest, docile girl, bright and original.

I had been unable to learn enough of her history to do anything for her. And when I left the village in the autumn, I regretfully left Rachel, for I had become interested in her.

Two years later I was again in the village, and learned that Mrs. Brown had died a year before, that on her death-bed she had given Rachel a package of letters that had been received from Mr. Adams, Rachel's father, and that he was living in Australia, had been fortunate, and was looking forward to the time when he should have his daughter with him.

He had no idea of the ill-treatment she had received, and had been sending money to Mrs. Brown for his daughter's care and support.

I soon found Rachel, and learned the story from her.

Something of the old look came into her refined face as she recounted the indignities she had suffered at Mrs. Brown's hands. But it was chased away by a look of pity, as she told me of the painful death of the wretched woman.

And now my story must come to an end, for I only know that Rachel went to her father that summer, and one grateful letter came back to me, informing me that she had found a home, and a kind and loving father.

DEATH NOT TO BE FEARED.—Dr. G. L. Beardsley, a medical expert, has been giving to the public the latest investigation by physicians respecting the phenomena attending the closing of life. It seems that while there is a natural dread of death on the part of all sane and wholesome people, there is no such repugnance among those whose end is near.

The function of dying is negative; we fall to pieces like a flower. The organic, chemical changes are not only natural, but are accompanied by a sense of relief and even of pleasure. The criteria of death are being satisfied, and the process is consummated when this extinction of sensibility prevails at the ultimate filaments. During the progress of this dissolution of the nerve force, this creeping on of the numbness of death, the individual is rapidly passing into a condition of repose, and, instead of torture or pangs, a degree of self-satisfaction oft approaching to enthusiasm is realized. The sensations peculiar to the therapeutical operation of opium, hashish, ether, etc., are not improbably akin to the mental activities of the dying. Barring the hallucinations experienced in the stupor as it gains on the subject, the moribund is familiar with naught that borders on suffering. His carbonic acid has poisoned or narcotized the several ganglia, and reflex productions are interdicted.

A consummate analgesia prevails. In short, the notion of pain is forbidden the instant that any stimulus fails to excite a response. The condition to this irritability is that the nerve center and track are sound. If this vigor vanishes, reflex phenomena are at an end, suffering, physiologically speaking, is impossible, because of the arrest of the function of the sympathetic. Under these conditions there is no physical or mental recoil from death. Dr. Wm. Hunter was sorry he was unable to write "how easy and delightful is it to die." Dr. Solander, the traveler, was so delighted with sensations of excess in cold that he was the first to lie down in the snow to realize the luxury of such a death. Dr. Burney tried hard to resist the efforts made to resuscitate him from drowning, so bewitched was he by his prolonged slumber. Infants die as serenely as they breathe, and though hanging is the most cruel form of death, save crucifixion, yet after the first agony from strangulation, hallucinations rapidly follow that are intensely pleasurable. Death means rest and relief from suffering. Its chief terror to the well is in what may follow in the long and lonely night which comes after dissolution.

GIRLS THAT ARE LOVABLE.—Girls without an undesirable love of liberty and craze for individualism; girls who will let themselves be guided; girls who have the filial sentiment well developed, and who feel the love of a daughter for the woman who acts as their mother; girls who know that every day and all day long cannot be devoted to holiday-making without the intervention of duties more or less irksome; girls who, when they can gather them, accept their roses with frank and girlish sincerity of pleasure, and, when they are denied, submit without repining to the inevitable hardship of circumstances—these are the girls whose companionship gladdens and does not oppress or distract the old, whose sweetness and ready submission to the reasonable control of authority make life so pleasant and their charge so light to those whose care they are.

M. S.

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CURES THE WORST PAINS in from one to twenty minutes. Not one hour after reading this need any one SUFFER WITH PAIN.

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A half to a teaspoonful in half a tumbler of water will, in a few moments, cure Cramp, Spasms, Sour Stomach, Nausea, Vomiting, Heartburn, Nervousness, Sleeplessness, Sick Headache, Diarrhœa, Dysentery, Cholera Morbus, Colic, Flatulency and all internal pains. For severe cases of the foregoing Complaints see our printed directions.

It is Highly Important that Every Family Keep a Supply of

Radway's Ready Relief

Always in the house. Its use will prove beneficial on all occasions of pain or sickness. There is nothing in the world that will stop pain or arrest the progress of disease as quickly as the Ready Relief.

It is pleasant to take as a tonic, anodyne or soothing lotion.

Where epidemic diseases prevail, such as Fevers, Dysentery, Cholera, Influenza, Diphtheria, Scarlet Fever, Pneumonia and other malignant diseases, RADWAY'S READY RELIEF will, if taken as directed, protect the system against attacks, and if seized with sickness, quickly cure the patient.

Malaria in its Various Forms, Fever and Ague.

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Not only cures the patient seized with malaria, but if people exposed to it will every morning on getting out of bed take twenty or thirty drops of the READY RELIEF in a glass of water and drink it and eat, say a cracker, they will escape attacks.

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Dr. Radway & Co.:
I have been using your medicines for the last twenty years, and in all cases of Chills and Fever I have never failed to cure. I never use anything but your READY RELIEF and PILLS.
THOS. J. JONES.

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The application of the Ready Relief will afford instant ease and comfort.

It was the first and is THE ONLY PAIN REMEDY that instantly stops the most excruciating pains, allays inflammation, and cures Congestions, whether of the Lungs, Stomach, Bowels or other glands or organs, by one application.

Price, 50 cts. per Bottle. Sold by druggists.

DR. RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT,

The Great Blood Purifier

Pure blood makes sound flesh, strong bone and a clear skin. If you would have your flesh firm, and your bones sound, and your complexion fair, use RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT. It possesses wonderful power in curing all forms of scrofulous and eruptive diseases, syphiloid ulcers, tumors, sores, enlarged glands, &c., rapidly and permanently. Dr. Randolph McIntire, of St. Hyacinthe, Canada, says: "I completely and marvelously cured a victim of Scrofula in its last stage by following your advice given in your little treatise on that disease."

Joseph Bushell, of Dennison Mills, Quebec, was "completely cured by two bottles of RADWAY'S RESOLVENT of an old sore on the leg."

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A remedy composed of ingredients of extraordinary medical properties, essential to purify, heal, repair and invigorate the broken-down and wasted body. All druggists. $1 a bottle.

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"A FINE, SURE MEDICINE."

RADWAY & CO.—*Gentlemen:* Your Pills have often warded off sickness in my family. I never think it safe to be without them; they are a fine, sure medicine. Most respectfully yours,
HENRY KENWORTH.
CHEBANSE, Iroquois Co., Illinois.

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I am using your R. R. Relief and your Regulating Pills and have recommended them above all pills, and sell a great many of them. I have them on hand always, and use them in my practice and in my own family, and expect to, in preference of all Pills. Yours respectfully,
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TO THE PUBLIC.—Be sure and ask for RADWAY'S and see that the name "RADWAY" is on what you buy.

Humorous.

HER REPLY.

Jack grew tired of Sallie's flirting:
  Jealous of the smiles she cast
On the other beaux around her—
  And he vowed, "This shall not last!"

One day when he sat beside her,
  Said he with a restless sigh:
"I wish I was in Halifax!"
  Sallie answered: "So do I."

"I will go!" he said in anger,
  "And I hope that, by-and-by,
You'll find one that suits you better!"
  Sallie answered: "So do I."

West he went; but mem'ry dies not,
  Though the feet afar may rove,
And he found that change of climate
  Cooled his wrath, but not his love.

Ere a year had passed a longing
  Came upon him to behold
Sallie's face, her eyes like sapphires,
  And her hair like threads of gold.

He returned to find that Sallie,
  Though much wooed, had not been won;
She had suitors in abundance,
  But of late she smiled on none.

Once again he sat beside her,
  Long he talked about the past;
Then he said he wished the present
  Moment would forever last.

"Long I've waited," said he; "Sallie,
  Time is swiftly going by,
And I think we'd better marry."
  Sallie answered: "So do I."

M. E. S.

A revolver—The earth.

A head-wind—A sneeze.

Kept on file—The handle.

Hard to beat—A china egg.

Faithful attendants—Shadows.

Perfectly shocking—An earthquake.

Narrow escape—The tip of a gas jet.

Bottom figures—The last on the page.

By the weigh—The man at the scales.

A knavish trick—Taking with the Jack.

Hush money—The price of a family cradle.

High living for hard times—Rooms in the attic.

The home circle—Walking round with the baby at night.

The lady who knit her brows is engaged upon a pair of stockings.

Should a mustard plaster be classed among drawing materials?

If a man is struck by a woman's beauty, is it actionable as an assault?

"You can't do that again," said the pig, when the boy cut off his tail.

"This suspense is killing me," said the man who was being hanged.

If you want to see a wild cat simply hold up the domestic article by the tail.

When is a book like a lover's farewell?—When it is finished with a clasp.

When is a baseball bat like a society girl?—When it strives to make a hit at every ball.

Why is a box on the ear like a young lady's heart in matrimony?—Because it is given with the hand.

Railroads are like laundresses—they have ironed the whole country and occasionally do a little mangling.

There are two ways of stopping the pains of toothache. Having the tooth pulled out or committing suicide.

When a young man is fingering the cash left him by his grandfather, can it be said he is revelling in his ancestral hash?

A young correspondent wants to know: "What is the critical period in a man's life?" Well, my boy, it usually begins about six weeks after he is married, and lasts some time.

A farmer reminded his hired man at the breakfast table that he had eaten eleven buckwheats. "Well, you count and I'll eat," said the hired man, harpooning the twelfth cake with his fork.

"Do you see that dog?" asked the dirty-faced man. "Well, sir, that animal saved my life once." "Did he?" replied Fogy. "Don't blame him; he probably didn't know any better."

"When do you think of celebrating your wooden wedding?" asked one citizen of another. "Sh!" was the cautious reply. "Don't mention it! There are altogether too many broomsticks and rolling-pins in the house already."

"Mr. Jones," said little Johnny to that gentleman, who was making an afternoon call, "can whisky talk?" "No, my child. How ever can you ask such a question?" "Oh, nothing! Only ma said whisky was beginning to tell on you."

There was a feud between the 4-year-old young lady and her aunt, which came at last to declared hostilities. But the little lady knelt down at night and said her prayers: Bless papa and bless mamma, and—" there came a long, ominous pause—"bless auntie; but if you can't bless her it doesn't matter."

He was a prosperous merchant and sometimes visited his old nurse, who one day expressed her surprise that he did not marry. "Well, you see, Sarah," said he, "since my brother Tom returned from the far West the girls won't look at me." "Ah, never mind, Master Dick," replied the comforting old soul, "some of 'em prefer the ugly ones."

FALSE AND TRUE PLEASURE.—Nothing is more certain in reason and experience than that every inordinate appetite and affection is a punishment to itself; and is perpetually crossing its own pleasure, and defeating its own satisfaction, by overshooting the mark it aims at. For instance, "intemperance" in eating and drinking, instead of delighting and satisfying nature, doth but load and clog it; and instead of quenching a natural thirst, which it is extremely pleasant to do, creates an unnatural one, which is troublesome and endless. The pleasure of "revenge," as soon as it is executed, turns into grief and pity, guilt and remorse, and a thousand melancholy wishes that we had restrained ourselves from so unreasonable an act. And the same is as evident in other sensual excesses not so fit to be described. We may trust Epicurus, for this, that there can be no true pleasure without temperance in the use of pleasure. And God and reason hath set us no other bounds concerning the use of sensual pleasures, but that we take care not to be injurious to ourselves or others in the kind or degree of them. And it is very visible, that all sensual excess is naturally attended with a double inconvenience—as it goes beyond the limits of nature, it begets bodily pains and diseases; as it transgresseth the rules of reason and religion, it breeds guilt and remorse in the mind. And these are, beyond comparison, the two greatest evils in this world: a diseased body, and a discontented mind; and in this I am sure I speak to the inward feeling and experience of men; and say nothing but what every vicious man finds, and hath a more lively sense of, than is to be expressed by words. TILLOTSON.

THE HOMELY GIRL.—There is an old adage which says, "Beauty is but skin-deep but ugly goes to the bone." It does not bear the truth on its face. A homely girl, if she realizes that she is not pretty, is generally good, generous; and, if she gets married she makes a good wife.

The pretty doll of a girl, with the face of a wax figure and with sylph-like form, generally becomes the cross, ugly old woman. She grows ill-natured because her beauty has faded, which was all she prized when young.

On the contrary, the homely girl welcomes age because it brings with it the respect due to accumulated years. Age is the leveller of distinction, and the pretty, vain minx who would slight a homely sister of her own age will pay due respect and reverence to the aged of her sex.

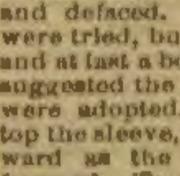
The homely girl never attempts coquetry. In the absence of personal charms, she cultivates her mind to make up the deficiency, and generally succeeds. Let the homely girl take courage. Men of sense and honor admire her for her good qualities of mind and heart.

BUTTONS.—Everybody of an observant turn of mind has noticed the two or three buttons on the cuffs of military and even other coats, but few know the origin and reason of this custom. They were first worn by soldiers in the English army. The first uniform coats of the English army had no buttons on the cuffs, and the soldiers used to draw the cuff of their coat across their nose and mouth on every occasion when a pocket handkerchief or napkin might have been called in requisition. As a matter of course the cuff became shiny and defaced. Punishment and reprimand were tried, but they did not stop this habit, and at last a board of officers met, and they suggested the buttons on the sleeve, which were adopted. They were first worn on top the sleeve, but they have moved backward as the handkerchief has moved forward. To-day the uniform coat of every nation has buttons on the sleeve or cuff; and the above is a true and authentic account of the origin of the custom.

A WELL-KNOWN lawyer in Chicago, who was also notorious for the monumental repulsiveness of his features, once attacked a prisoner at the bar with great bitterness. The judge advised him several times to use moderation, but the lawyer continued his tirade: "The wretch bears his character in his face—any one can read it. Why, he is the ugliest man I ever knew." "Counsellor," again remarked the judge, "you are forgetting yourself."

MOTHER (to married daughter)—"Why, what's the matter, Clara? What are you crying about?" Clara—"Henry is so awful cruel [sob], he is getting worse and worse every day [sob]. What do you suppose he told me just now? He told me I must get rid of cook; he couldn't stand her cooking any longer [sob]. And he knows she hasn't done one bit of cooking for a fortnight, and that I have done it all myself! Boo-hoo! boo-hoo-hoo!"

TO CURE FITS.—For a fit of passion, walk in the open air. For a fit of idleness, count the ticking of a clock. For a fit of extravagance or folly, go to the workhouse. For a fit of ambition, go into a churchyard and read the gravestones. For a fit of repining, look about for the halt and the blind, and visit the bed-ridden and afflicted.



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SPECIFIC No. 28
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Nervous Debility, Vital Weakness,
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$1 per vial, or 5 vials and large vial powder, for $5.
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For ALL of those Painful Delicate Complaints and Complicated troubles and Weaknesses so common among our Wives, Mothers, and Daughters.

It will cure entirely all ovarian or vaginal troubles, Inflammation and Ulceration, Falling and Displacements, & consequent spinal Weakness, and is particularly adapted to the change of life.

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LADIES,—IT WILL NOT PERFORM SURGICAL OPERATIONS OR CURE CANCER, BUT IT WILL UNDER ALL CIRCUMSTANCES, ACT IN HARMONY WITH THE LAWS OF NATURE. THAT FEELING OF BEARING DOWN, CAUSING PAIN, WEIGHT AND BACKACHE, IS ALWAYS PERMANENTLY CURED BY ITS USE.

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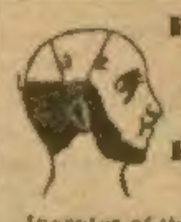
BLACKING
A HARMLESS SHOE DRESSING.
Gold Medal received for superiority over all other dressings. Will not crack or harden the leather. Bottle contains double the quantity of other dressings. 25c. Your Shoe Dealer has it.



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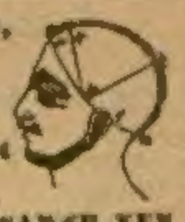

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No. 1. The round of the head.
No. 2. From forehead over the head to neck.
No. 3. From ear to ear over the top.
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PILES. Instant relief. Final cure and never returns. No indelicacy. Neither knife, purge, salve or suppository. Liver, kidney and all bowel troubles—especially constipation—cured like magic. Sufferers will learn of a simple remedy free, by addressing, J. H. REEVES, 78 Nassau St., N. Y.

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5 CENTS PACKAGE
Makes Five Gallons of a delicious, sparkling temperance beverage. Strengthens and purifies the blood. Its purity and delicacy commend it to all. Sold by druggists and storekeepers everywhere.

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The new and exquisite Toilet Soap which for perfect Purity and Permanency of Delicate fragrance is unequalled for either Toilet or Nursery use. No materials unless carefully selected and absolutely pure ever enter into its manufacture, hence this Soap is perfectly suitable for use in the Nursery and unrivalled for general Toilet use.

LAIRD'S WHITE LILAC TOILET SOAP is refreshing and soothing to the skin, leaving it beautifully clear soft and smooth.

Price, 20c. per Cake. Box 3 Cakes 50c.

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TO PLAY MUSIC
WITHOUT STUDY!
This Can Be Done by Means of the
INSTANTANEOUS GUIDE to the PIANO or ORGAN.

Anyone knowing a tune, either "in the head," as it is called," or able to hum, whistle or sing, can play it WITHOUT ANY PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OF MUSIC OR THE INSTRUMENTS. In fact it may be the first time they have ever seen a piano or organ, yet if they know so much as to whistle or hum a tune—say "Way Down on the Swanee River," for instance—they can play it IMMEDIATELY, correctly and with good effect, on the piano or organ, with the assistance of this GUIDE. THE GUIDE shows how the tunes are to be played with both hands and in different keys. Thus the player has the full effect of the bass and treble clefs, together with the power of making correct and harmonious chords to accompaniments. It must be plainly understood that the Guide will not make an accomplished musician without study. It will do nothing of the kind. What it can do, do well and WITHOUT FAIL, is to enable anyone understanding the nature of a tune or air in music to play such tunes or airs, without ever having opened a music book, and without previously needing to know the difference between A or G, a half-note or a quarter-note, a sharp or a flat. The Guide is placed on the instrument, and the player, without reference to anything but what he is shown by it to do, can in a few moments play the piece accurately and without the least trouble. Although it does not and never can supplant regular books of study, it will be of incalculable assistance to the player by "ear" and all others who are their own instructors. By giving the student the power to play IMMEDIATELY twelve tunes of different character—this number of pieces being sent with each Guide—the ear grows accustomed to the sounds, and the fingers used to the position and touch of the keys. So, after a very little practice with the Guide, it will be easy to pick out, almost with the skill and rapidity of the trained player, any air or tune that may be heard or known.

The Guide, we repeat, will not learn how to read the common sheet music. But it will teach those who cannot spend years learning an instrument, how to learn a number of tunes without EITHER PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OR STUDY. A child if it can say its A, B, C's and knows a tune—say "The Sweet Bye and Bye"—can play it, after a few attempts, quite well. There are many who would like to be able to do this, for their own and the amusement of others, and to such we commend The Guide as BOUND TO DO for them ALL WE SAY. Its cheapness and usefulness, moreover, would make it a very good present to give a person, whether young or old, at Christmas. Almost every home in the land has a piano, organ or melodeon, whereon seldom more than one of the family can play. With this Guide in the house everybody can make more or less good use of their instruments.

The Guide will be sent to any address, all postage paid, on receipt of FIFTY CENTS. (Postage stamps, 2's, taken.) For Ten Cents extra a music book, containing the words and music for 100 popular songs, will be sent with The Guide. Address

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Latest Fashion Phases.

Moire is in full vogue, especially white moire, which makes exquisite evening dresses with draperies of white crepe de Chine.

By-the-by, the printed crepe de Chine is of unusual beauty this year, exquisitely printed with lovely flower-sprays in natural colors and other patterns.

Printed crepe de Chine with very pale or white grounds for the evening, and darker grounds for the days, replace among the wealthy the graceful, artistic, printed foulards, which appeared last spring, and which are "in" again this season.

The style of printing is the same, the coloring also, but of course the texture is different; nothing can, and nothing ever will, equal crepe de Chine in its texture and draping qualities.

But to return to our richer silks. To accompany a skirt of white moire, a magnificent material has been prepared, white moire with ten-inch stripes of pale old-pink satin, down the centre of which runs a three-inch stripe of pink moire. This is to be employed as a train, the corsage being of white moire with pink plastron, the flowers and silk-stockings being pink in color.

Equally beautiful as a skirt or train material is Cluny Pompadour pekin, a rich white silk with six-inch stripes separated by two stripes of silk imitating Cluny lace, placed close together an inch apart; one of these stripes is an inch wide, the larger being two inches. Down the six-inch silk stripe runs a lovely Pompadour bouquet of roses, heliotrope and leaves, all in natural colors, a few of the larger leaves in the background being of white Cluny lace. It is quite a work of art.

A second example of Cluny Pompadour pekin has wide stripes or panels, ten inches wide, of silver-white satin covered with exquisite orchids and other flowers in the most delicate colors, some of the stalks and leaves being of silver-white silk instead of green. These panels are separated by stripes an inch and a half wide of brilliant red satin worked with white embroidered designs resembling applications of white Cluny lace.

The Cluny designs are fashionable; we see them on surahs and silks of all descriptions. One navy surah has yellow Cluny designs, and stripes of red Cluny at intervals worked on a ground of navy and pale green.

As for pekin Pompadours, they are of every variety, but the white silk ground and pale-pink rose-sprays on satin or surah seem to be very prevalent, the stripes being in all sizes.

Some odd but truly artistic specimens of coloring are to be seen of great beauty. A glace or shot taffetas (crossed pink and white silk threads) is embroidered with small white spots, and has two-inch stripes at intervals of a rich, not too dark navy-blue embroidered with larger spots in pink, those spots being enclosed in a kind of network of pink silk threads. Up each edge of the blue stripe, embroidered on the glace stripe, are small flowers in a pale asthetic green with pink hearts, and leaves of a kind of peach color, a trifle more mauve than the general pink shade, which also is inclined to peach. The plain glace taffetas spotted with white, is to be had to match with corsage and skirt.

Among the new evening colors must be quoted a brilliant but pale apple-green, much seen on faconne silks. One example of shot white and green faille has wide stripes in faconne satin of the green only, across which are thrown graceful rose bouquets, beautifully worked in the darker green and white silks.

A second example has very broad satin stripes, and narrower stripes consisting of six narrow silk stripes outlined with satin threads; the wide satin stripe has small broche sprays in the same color, forming a series of festoons all over it, the festoon being clasped together at intervals with a lovely spray of moss rose-buds, artistically worked in shaded amber silks.

Pekin boule is the name given to a faille with wide stripes formed merely by a collection of large balls or circles, in satin, bigger than a penny, each being embroidered with a small flower spray or wreath in the same color.

An eccentric silk material is Pompadour velvet pekin, a rich surah (the variety called grosse cote) in a deep pink threaded closely with white. At inch distances are half-inch stripes of beige velvet, and each third surah stripe is replaced by an inch band of pale green faille, embroidered with separate tiny red roses, and a continuous spray of roses alternately. The plain pink and white surah to match is provided; this material has been prepared for garden-party, bazaar, and afternoon gala costumes for ladies under thirty.

Still simpler, suitable for young girls, is a white surah finely chequered with cross-blue and gold threads, the pekin to match having stripes of peach satin, threaded with white lines vertically.

An entirely new material for day or evening wear is that known as silk batiste, with the texture of ordinary batiste, but in silk; it is a very beautiful fabric, far more elegant than surah, and is especially beautiful in pale cream, the pekin to match, which has wide white stripes figured with three narrow cord stripes, and a still wider stripe consisting of three navy satin stripes 1½-inches wide, and separated by half an inch of cream batiste.

This material makes an exquisite dress, the pekin forming the skirt, with overskirt of plain batiste gracefully looped with navy-satin bows. The plain batiste has plastron, collar, and paraments of the striped material. It is a capital toilette for bridesmaids, especially if paler stripes than navy are chosen. It is a very durable material, cleaning beautifully.

Of course plaids and chequers come in for silken fabrics, at least among those for day wear. Rich French faille has the pekin to match with broad stripes of chequered surah in two colors.

A visiting toilette has a skirt of brown faille striped with brown and white chequered surah. A tablier of plain faille falls low in front, but is draped up on each side. The corsage is of the pekin, beautifully arranged so that the stripes apparently fit the figure; in front is a full plastron of chequered surah.

Plaids are not so much seen in faille as in the softer silks, like surah and taffetas, which always have the plain to match. For half-mourning an effective gray taffetas has broad stripes of gray and black, with wide chequered stripes of white satin, and narrow lines of white silk, running horizontally only. Made up with plain gray taffetas this plaid is very elegant, and is more often used for the second skirt or tunic than the under-skirt like the pekins.

Plaid surahs are very rich, but they are less elegant perhaps than the self-color surahs merely crossed with chequering lines of two different colors, like a beautiful navy-surah widely chequered with four satin lines alternately brown and white, the white lines suddenly break and become brown lines when about to cross the brown, and the same thing happens with the white, so that the two colors never cross, and the whole effect is of a close series of large four-lined crosses all over the material, making it alternately white and brown.

Though pekins and plaids have put broches, that is, broches with no stripes about them, somewhat in the shade, yet for evening wear, as train and skirt materials, many ladies prefer them, and wear them in preference to pekins.

Certainly broches give more scope to artistic design, for where the material is cut by stripes the broche designs have to be more limited.

Some exquisite examples of broches in the new colors are to be had. One heliotrope silk has two lovely broche sprays, one in heliotrope and the other in white, loosely interlaced, and apparently thrown on the ground, the plain material between the sprays being figured with large white silk pastilles with broche heliotrope edge. It should be used as a train, this material, so that its full beauty can be seen.

A novel and very beautiful broche is a shot-pink and pale blue taffetas, producing a peachy tint; it is figured with separate broche velvet flowers, each with one leaf on the stalk, resembling large marguerites in size and form, but they are in three different colors; in all the heart of the flower is dark or pale brown, and the leaves are all pale moss, but the petals of the flowers are pale brown, dark-amber, peach, or a medium blue-green, all lovely asthetic shades.

The broche again is employed for the train and plastron of the corsage, the skirt and low-necked sleeveless corsage being of plain shot taffetas to match.

Odds and Ends.

FANCY PASTRY, AND HOW TO MAKE IT.
(Concluded.)

Fruit Ifiazolettes.—Roll out as many scraps of pastry as there may be into two thin large pieces of equal size. Upon one of these pieces lay at equal distances, about an inch apart, little knobs of firm jam. Moisten the pastry around each knob with water or white of egg, then lay the other piece of pastry on the top, and with a small round cutter press the pastry lightly close to the jam. With another cutter a size larger cut the tartlets out, lay them on a buttered baking sheet, brush them with white of egg, and bake. This is a quick way of making a number of small tartlets all at once. Round ring cutters are to be bought, both plain and fluted, in boxes containing a dozen each, for a moderate sum, and they are very convenient for stamping out trifles of this sort. The appearance of these rissolettes will be still further improved if, after being egged over, a little round of pastry the size of a silver quarter is laid on the top of each, then egged over again. When the tartlets are almost baked, take them out of the oven, sift white sugar over them, and put them back to glaze. Before serving them put a knob of bright colored jelly upon the smaller ring.

For a homely dish made from the remnants of pastry, the following is to be recommended: Grease a plate or oval dish, and line it with pastry. Fill the centre with a single layer of fresh lemons, which have been very thinly sliced, after having been peeled and entirely freed from the white pith and the pips. Sprinkle castor sugar over the fruit, pour a little golden syrup on the top. Moisten the edge of the tart, lay the cover on and fasten it down securely to keep the juice in; pinch or otherwise ornament the edge, and bake in a good oven.

Turnovers of all sorts are always approved. The pastry should be rolled out thinly, and stamped into a round shape with a saucer. A little jam or stewed fruit is then placed on one-half of the pastry, and the other half is turned quite over, the edges being first moistened to make them adhere. Sometimes thin slices of cheese, with pepper, salt, mustard, and a few drops of vinegar, are put inside turnovers for the sake of variety.

I must not turn away from speaking of the small trifles which may be made of pastry, without reminding my friends that if there should happen to be a little cold meat of any sort in the house, very excellent Cornish pasties may be prepared, especially if there are also a few boiled cold potatoes in the larder. There should be about equal quantities of meat and vegetables. If there are no cold vegetables, they must be boiled specially for the purpose. Cornish pasties are prepared as follows: Cut both meat and vegetables quite small (the potatoes are best when passed through a wire salve), and with each pound of meat put half a small onion, which has been chopped as finely as possible, and plenty of salt and pepper. If approved, other additions may be made, such as chopped apple and chopped boiled turnip; but, whatever these are, it is better that they should be well chopped. A by no means despicable Cornish pasty may be made of flaked dressed fish and potatoes. Roll out the trimmings of pastry to the thickness of a quarter of an inch, then stamp it out in rounds with a saucer. Wet the edges all around, put a little of the savory mixture in the middle, bring the edges to the top by doubling the paste up, and press them together with the thumb and finger to make a frill. Put them on a greased baking sheet, and bake in a good oven until the pasty is done, then take them out, brush them over with yolk of egg or with a little milk, put them again in the oven to brown, and they are then ready.

Sausage Rolls are also very excellent. Boil the sausages for five minutes in water. (This preliminary boiling is necessary, because the sausages would not be sufficiently cooked if they were allowed only as much time as was required for baking the crust.) Take them up, drain them, skin them, cut them in half, and let them cool. Roll out the pastry to the thickness of a quarter of an inch, and cut it in into pieces, four inches one way, and three inches the other. Lay half a sausage in each, wet the edges of the pastry, roll it around the meat, and press the ends securely. Bake in a good oven, and five minutes before the rolls are taken out, brush them over with egg or milk. When baked, let them stand upright, leaning against something, until they are cool.

THE Boston street directory shows H. W. Longfellow to be pursuing the avocation of grocer, R. W. Emerson sells shoes in Boston, Walter Scott is both baker and tailor, Francis Bacon sells shirts, Charles Lamb is a salesman, while Matthew Arnold works humbly in brass, with no more fitness of place than may be found in the fact that he dwells on Athens street.

WOMEN love to be loved. The only noticeable thing about this fact is that men encourage them in it.

Confidential Correspondents.

ROBIN.—Toasts and sentiments are quite out of fashion now. Except at public dinners, where there are standing toasts that have to be drunk, no one thinks of such a thing.

BLASS.—The two triangles interlaced one with the other, forming six points or angles, are an emblem of very ancient Egyptian origin, and have reference to a Divine Trinity.

PUPIL.—Morning lasts till noon, afternoon till six p. m., evening follows. It is usual with persons who dine late to say good morning till after dinner hour. 2. Etc. means, and the rest, or what follows. 3. Courtesy generally places the lady first.

EDITH, A. C.—Old shoes are popularly supposed to be lucky. The throwing of rice is a custom borrowed from the East, and signifies that the throwers wish the happy pair prosperity and an abundance of the good things of this world; especially a goodly proportion of olive branches.

NOBODY.—Many persons grow till they are twenty. 2. You cannot stretch yourself, be content and you will grow. 3. You need only behave in a modest, ladylike fashion, and you will be liked and admired as much as other girls. 4. You are too young to think of having men dangling after you.

T. R.—You may clean the red facings of a tunic with warm starch, flour, or whiting, if only a little soiled; or bread crumbs will do. If greasy, use benzine, and finish as above directed; or you can use a paste of fuller's-earth and water, which should be left on for several hours; then brushed off. Red is, perhaps, the most difficult color to clean effectually.

DAUGHTER.—We suppose by your inquiry you allude to the tradition that Sodom and Gomorrah were submerged in the Dead Sea. But this does not seem to be the story of Josephus, for he holds that the Valley of Sodom (not the town) became the Dead Sea; while in the 5th century Clement, Justin Martyr and Antoninus speak of the ruins and the ashes, and say nothing of the submergence.

NUNQUAM.—No, it is scarcely permissible. You will find it much more agreeable in the long run if you wait till you can obtain an introduction without appearing to force yourself on the lady's notice in any way. As to the difficulties you speak of, it should be your pleasure to try and overcome them. A very ardent admirer would let few things stand in the way of attaining his object in a legitimate fashion.

L. M. R.—Take a common-sense view, and you will be right. Do not seek refuge in in sophistries. The view taken is wrong. You might as well say that, if we loaded a firearm and placed it in the hand of a wilful boy, we should not be responsible for what he did with it, if only we told him to be good; or that we should not be responsible if we set a blind man to cross a narrow plank-bridge so that he fell into the water, if only we gave him advice how to get out of the water when he had fallen in.

DELLA.—Your request is a very strange one as you will probably see on reflection, but as it involves nothing of great importance, we will comply. We cannot now remember accurately, but think the answer had reference to some questions sent by a lady correspondent in Texas. She "hated men," and particularly disliked one thin youth who bored her with his attentions. Coupled with this, she imagined, that as she was slightly over twenty, and a seventeen year old friend had recently been married, she was getting "dreadfully old." This is the purport of what gave rise to the answer in the clipping you enclose.

MARY.—Do not, for pity sake, try to render yourself more intelligent for the sake of your future husband. He doubtless chose you for what you are, not for what he thought you might be able to make yourself. He will greatly prefer to train your mind, if it wants training, himself. Men do not, universally at least, desire "well-informed" women for their wives. If they do, they can select them. Strong-minded and highly-educated women may be admired at a distance, with something of a cold shiver; but nineteen out of every twenty well-educated and energetic men would prefer that a wife should be simply good and intelligent.

F. LANBERT.—Equivocation consists in making a statement in such a way that it is susceptible of equally good and reasonable, though different and perhaps contradictory, interpretations. When a man equivocates, his mode of expressing himself is indefinite, and it is not certain which of several impressions he wishes those who hear him to receive. Equivocation may be intentional, or it may be the result of want of clearness either in thought or in the choice of language by the person equivocating. In its popular use the term is almost always employed to imply intent to deceive; but, strictly speaking, intent to deceive is not a necessary part of the act of equivocation.

HAMILTON W. M.—Queen Victoria traces her descent from Henry II. of England, or rather from Maud, his daughter, by Queen Eleanor, who was daughter of William V., Duke of Aquitaine, married 1167. Henry V., Duke of Bavaria, was grandson of Guelph, Count of Altdorf. Henry VI. was Count Palatine of the Rhine, in right of his first wife Agnes; but that is out of the direct line. The Queen traces through William of Winchester, Longsword, whose only son was Otho I., created Duke of Brunswick and Luneburg by the Emperor Frederick II. This Otho I. married a Maud, daughter of Albert II., Elector of Brandenburg, and hence the descent to Victoria and her family.

CARRIE.—It is quite true that toads are found alive in stones broken in quarries, strata of coal and limestone, and lizards and snakes also. But Professor Buckland says that if no apparent communication have existed between the cavity and the outside of the stone, one must have been closed up by stalactitic incrustation after the creature had grown too large for exit. Life will exist in these reptiles to a period under two years in porous stone, supposing them to have been well fed before incarceration, as demonstrated by a series of experiments. Even a thin plaster of Paris casing is permeable to air sufficiently to maintain life, while in a torpid state, for thirteen months. Very minute insects will enter almost imperceptible cavities, as well as air and moisture. The white and acid fluid contained in the protuberances at the back of the toad's head is certainly poisonous. If pressed it will jet out from them. But this forms no objection to keeping the animals in a greenhouse or garden to rid them of ants, slugs, and beetles.